



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

HOMELY PEARLES
AT
RANDOM STRUNG.

7

POEMS, SONGS, AND SKETCHES.

PRINTED
BY
THOMAS BUNCLE,
ARBOATH.

HOMELY PEARLS AT RANDOM STRUNG.

POEMS, SONGS, AND SKETCHES.

BY
THOMAS WATSON,
AUTHOR OF 'THE RHYMER'S FAMILY.'



EDINBURGH :
JOHN MENZIES AND CO., 12 HANOVER STREET ;
GLASGOW : 32 WEST GEORGE STREET.
ARBBROATH : THOMAS BUNCLE, MARKET PLACE,
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

—
MDCCCLXXUL

270. 9. 423.



CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

GLAMIS CASTLE :

MACBETH,	1
BRINGING HOME THE BRIDE,	3
THE GAMBLERS,	4
LADY GLAMIS,	6
NOTES TO GLAMIS CASTLE,	9
LAMENT OF THE COUNTESS OF STRATHMORE,	13
THE DEIL IN LOVE,—IN TWO PARTS,	15
THE DOMINIE'S SANG,	16
NOTE TO THE DEIL IN LOVE,	26

THE GAME PRESERVE IN GIBB'S CLOSE :

I. THE LAIRD,	27
II. FRANCIE IN HIS DEN,	29
III. THE COMING CHANGE,	31
IV. THE PRESERVE,	34
V. RE-UNION,	38
VI. THE TURN OF THE TIDE,	41
THE OLD GATE OF PANMURE,	44
THE LOG,	46
NOTE TO THE LOG,	47
THE LOST MAN,	48
NOTE TO THE LOST MAN,	54

THE MIDWIFE OF MITHERTON : GRAND SOIREE AND PRESENTATION TO MRS. MACAULDE :

I. THE GETTING UP,	55
II. THE REPORTER'S GALLERY,	59

SONGS :

THE DIRT GAES AFORE THE BESOM,	61
THERE'S NAE LUCK ABOUT THE HOUSE,	62

SONGS (*continued*):

LOVE'S TRANSFORMATION,	63
AILIE SWANKIE,	64
THE NIGHTINGALE OF ENGLAND,	65
O, WHO WOULD BE A QUEN,	67
WOMANKIND,	68
MISTRESS MACAUDLE,	69
III. MRS. MACPHUN PUTS HER FOOT IN IT,	
AND SO DO I,	69
WILLIE WYNE,	72
THE LUCKY MAN,—IN THREE CHAPTERS,	75
THE SQUIRE O' LOW DEGREE,	91
THE DEAD HORSEMAN OF VEITTIE'S GEIL,	93
THE DYING MAN AT SEA,	96
THE HUNGER FIEND,	98
NOTE TO THE HUNGER FIEND,	100
ARBROATH ABBEY,	101
NOTE TO ARBROATH ABBEY,	103
LINES ON THE DEATH OF A LITTLE GIRL,	105
TO MY LITTLE BOY,	107
THE HOWES O' KINNABER,	108
NOTE TO THE HOWES O' KINNABER,	111
THE MINISTER'S SON,—IN FIVE CHAPTERS,	112
THE SUPERSEDED MAN,	142
THE POET OF THE AGE,	145
THE PRIVATEER,	147
NOTE TO THE PRIVATEER,	153
ON THE CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF BURNS,	154
NOTE TO THE CENTENARY POEM,	156
A VOICE FROM SNIG'S END, WITH AN IRISH ECHO,	157
NOTE TO A VOICE FROM SNIG'S END,	158
THE HAT,	159
NOTE TO THE HAT,	160
GARIBALDI,	161
MONAL'S TRAVELS,	162

MY AIN WIFE AT HOME,	163
THE CROOKIT STICK AT LAST,	164
THE HAIRST FIELD,	165
BY MARYKIRK,	166
THE LILY AND THE ROSE,—A GLEE FOR TWO VOICES,	167
PETER SPEID,—IN SEVEN CHAPTERS,	169
SONG—‘THE LASSIE AT THE SCHULE’,	181
EXTRACTS FROM THE ‘GUSEDUB RECORD’:	
I. SCHOOL INQUISITORS,	200
II. THE REPORTER,	203
III. THE DOMINIE PRESSED INTO SERVICE,	205
IV. SCHOOLMASTERS, SCHOOL FEES, AND WORKING MEN,	209
V. ENDOWMENTS AND EMOLUMENTS OF SCHOOLMASTERS,	213
VI. GOSSIP AND LEES,	217
VII. THE DOMINIE AND JENNY UPON BISHOPS,	221
EXTRACTS FROM SANDY SNARL’S DICTIONARY:	
ADVICE,	224
DIGNITY,	225
PROPHET,	225
RESPECTABLE,	226
SUCCESS,	227
BORE,	228
DIRT,	229
INSANE,	229
POVERTY,	230
SENSATION,	231
IMITATION,	232
POET,	233
MONOTONY,	234
THE GERMAN NATIONAL HYMN,—NEW VERSION,	235
NOTE TO THE GERMAN NATIONAL HYMN,	236
THE EMIGRANT TO HIS LASS,	238
THE REVEREND FERGUS FERGUSON,	239

NOTE TO THE REVEREND FERGUS FERGUSON,	240
THE FENIAN INVASION OF CANADA,	241
THE GHOSTLY HOUSE O' DRUMLY:	
I. THE FLOOD,	243
II. THE OLD MANOR HOUSE,	247
III. THE FAMILY COUNCIL,	250
IV. GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES,	253
V. DRUMLY TRADITIONS,	258
VI. EXPLORATION,	264
VII. THE PLAY BEGINS,	269
MAGGIE BRAID'S SANG,	276
SANDY SAUNT'S CAUF,	278
NOTE TO SANDY SAUNT'S CAUF,	280
ELEGY ON THE LATE ROBERT PROCTOR, FORFAR,	281
SCIENCE,	282
LINTRATHEN BRAES,	283
THE HOLY GRAIL,	284
THE LASS THAT LO'ED ME DEARLY,	285
THE WINSOME WIFE,	286
KATIE BEATTIE,	287

INTRODUCTION.

MY first little book, published in 1851, was so favourably received that I am encouraged to publish a second volume, containing the best of the old pieces, along with later productions in prose and verse. I have been frequently told that as the first publication is not now to be had, I should bring out a second volume, and unite the most healthy of the elder family with the most presentable of the later progeny. I may say, however, that they come out by particular desire, having myself a very natural desire to see them collected under one cover. It is for the public to decide whether this wish is wise or foolish. At all events, there was no reason in delaying the matter if it was to be done at all, as I could not expect to surpass former efforts, now that my day is wearing far on in the afternoon. This, then, being in all probability a last appearance, and these remarks valedictory as well as prefatory, let me once more bespeak the attention of my former readers, and express a hope that the younger ones may take after their fathers in that respect. It has not yet become fashionable for an author to puff his own productions, so I must content myself

with saying, in justification of a second appearance before the public, that my first volume elicited favourable notices from the press, both of England and Scotland, and that I hope the second will not be less worthy, otherwise it would not have been offered for publication. All I ask is a fair hearing, a favourable hearing, if you will, but no favourable judgment, for that would soon be reversed. I am ready to allow merit in others, but equally ready to find fault, so cannot object to others claiming the same liberty in judging of my productions. I am prepared, therefore, to accept thankfully any judicious commendation that may be offered, and to bear humbly any deserved censure, without being foolishly puffed up by the one or greatly depressed by the other. Forty years ago I could not perhaps so truly have said so, but Time that turns the sapling into hard old wood also moderates the self-conceit of the green youth, as he grows older, unless it is so large as to constitute a disease. As we become better able to appreciate works far beyond our reach, we begin to learn to be humble. It is quite possible for us to be so without affectation, retaining at the same time the self-appreciation that is absolutely due to ourselves.

I may observe that the Glamis poems and 'The Old Gate of Panmure,' partly written while working at these places, are placed in the first part of the volume, along with 'The Deil in Love,' on

account of their well-known localities. The other pieces are placed in no particular order ; yet the reader will see that a little variety has been attempted in their arrangement, especially by interspersing prose and verse, which is thought to be judicious, for the sake of readers who are apt to get surfeited with rhyme.

It is well-known that all authors, learned or unlearned, must now address the public from the same platform, and rely on merit alone. 'Pretty well considering' is an obsolete phrase in literature. He that cannot acquit himself respectably must go down at once. Knowing that to be the case, I take my stand with diffidence, and submit my utterances to the judgment of the Public, content to bow to its decision.

ARBROATH, December 5, 1872.

ERRATA.

Page 13—line 6, *for 'calm' read 'balm.'*

,, 52—line 2, *for 'hill' read 'hills.'*

Paragraph beginning 'Thomas Carlyle,' page 104, misplaced.

It should belong to Note on the German Hymn,
page 237. Also, in the couplet which ends that
unfortunate paragraph, the word 'the' is wanting
before 'sword.' The lines should read—

'The young man will brawl at the evening board,
But the old man will draw at the dawning the sword.'

Page 145—Poet of the Age, 10th line, *for 'man' read 'men.'*

,, 170—*For 'ilk' read 'ilha'* in the quoted lines of verse.

P O E M S.

GLAMIS CASTLE.

MACBETH.

THE stately Castle that remains entire,
A great memorial house of old, to-day,
May never Lyon yield to slow decay,
And let the hearth-log of old Glamis expire.

For here the veil is from the past withdrawn,
The rude old ages meet us face to face ;
In battle harness* they maintain their place,
Brave ghosts that will not flee before the dawn.

We look around as if an ancient bard
Must needs return with harp and song again,
And knights and dames return to heed the strain,
With ghostly semblance of their old regard.

And should not symphonies of jingling mail,
With softer rustlings of the rich brocade,
Pervade the hall, as light, subdued by shade,
Meet adjuncts of the minstrel's chaunted tale.

The shirts of steel are here, and corslets rare,
And armour rude, in which old barons fought ;
And here embroidered pictures,† deftly wrought,
With perfect patience, by their ladies fair.

* Note A. Battle Harness. † Note B. Embroidered Pictures.
B

But harp and song are gone beyond recall,
 And so the simple harmonies of old,
 As lovers parted, in estrangement cold,
 For why, they meet no more in bower or hall.

But surely Truth, though hidden, must remain :
 We'll ask her if Macbeth was Thane of Glamis ?*
 If he was troubled here with conscience-qualms ?
 If here indeed a sleeping king was slain ?

And if there be, as we would fain believe,
 Remains of regal hall, or bower, or keep,
 That once pertained to him that murdered sleep,
 And her that did the dire intent conceive ?

If in this very hall of vaulted stone
 Sat Banquo's ghost, blood-stained and open-eyed,
 And shook the soul of the great Regicide,
 Who knew another deed of death was done ?

But though in vain we question ancient Truth†—
 Though she within her weedy well lie hid
 From every eye that's curtained with a lid,
 Have we not Fiction in immortal youth ?

Her mother, Truth, has not a fairer daughter
 Than noble Fiction ; beautiful is she,
 And charming ever, and so frank and free,—
 She never hides in wells beneath the water.

Her world is brighter than a planet pale,
 And by an Atlas is upheld perforce :
 Macbeth will still be haunted by Remorse,
 And still the Thane of Glamis will witches hail.

* Note C. Macbeth, Thane of Glamis.

† Note D. Truth.

BRINGING HOME THE BRIDE.

WE will not question Truth, of later day,
 What time the Lyon brought his royal bride*
 Home to his hold of Glamis, in prancing pride,
 With all the pomp of chivalrous array.

Come, Fancy, let us look into the past,
 And we will see this gallant riding home.
 Behold ! they come, on horses flecked with foam,
 Before a cloud of dust that follows fast.

And see the groups of vassals that await
 On every ground of vantage round about ;
 And hark ! the household voice in joyful shout
 Gives note of welcome at the Castle gate.

Anon, the archway rings with hoofs of horse,
 And now the drawbridge thunders with their tread ;
 Come, lords and ladies, for the feast is spread ;
 In, men at arms, or ye may fare the worse.

See, Glamis alights, and now with open arms
 He welcomes home his royal lady fair ;
 And hark ! again a shout is in the air
 That vibrates gladly o'er the distant farms.

Now, grooms to stables with the reeking steeds ;
 To chambers, knights, and doff your armour there ;
 And, ladies, to your tiring bowers repair ;
 But speed you, as our leader, Fancy, speeds.

She brings us to the feast of auld langsyne,
 And fills again the ancient drinking cups :
 See, Scotland's daughter raises to her lips
 The lion-goblet, filled with ruddy wine.†

* Note E. Royal Bride of Glamis.

† Note F. The Lion Goblet.

Now harp and song are in their blithesome prime,
 With all the ardour of the Troubadours ;
 And ladies list to loves of paramours,
 And chiefs to chivalrous romauts in rhyme.

The minstrel's meed is not a beggar's alms,
 But showers of silver merks in guerdon free,
 While on the towers are waving lovingly
 The lions twain, of Scotland and of Glamis.

Was there no shudder in this joy so sweet,
 No second sight to see in festive hall
 The Lyndsay's ambushment, the Lyon's fall,*
 The violent death, the bloody winding sheet ?

O happy ignorance of coming ill,
 That sees no shadow in the present shine !
 Unhappy knowledge that can ill divine,
 But not avert, yet boding evil still,

THE GAMBLERS.

OLD churlish Time, scant record thou wilt keep
 Of deaths, or bridals, in thy parchment pages,
 Or black or white days of the bygone ages,
 That thou hast left in dull oblivious sleep.

As thou wilt leave us too, insensate shade,
 In dateless void, to be forgotten soon ;
 Begrudge us not, therefore, the simple boon
 Of make-believe advance or retrograde.

And we will follow thee, with shifting rhymes,
 To days when factious barons vexed the land ;
 When here a triumvirate met, and plann'd
 A league defensive, common to the times.

* Note G. The Lyndsay's Murderous Ambush.
 B 3

The Earl of Huntly, and the 'tiger' lord
 Of Crawford, revel with the lord of Glamis ;
 While Brothock monks chaunt penitential psalms,
 And pray the saints to save from fire and sword.

And while the king, by policy in vain,
 Essays division of the rebels three,
 They laugh, and quaff, and flout in scornful glee,
 For each is king within his own domain.

By day they warn their allies, kith and kin ;
 To wine and wassail give the reckless night ;
 They play the witching cards till morning light
 Bedims the tapers, as it flashes in.

The Castle bell proclaims the Sabbath morn,
 And Glamis and Huntly rise, with sign of cross ;
 Fierce Crawford swears he would redeem his loss
 Upon the day of doom, or die foresworn.

And now a strange unbidden guest appears,
 Unquestioned who he was, or whence he came,
 With face impassable, and eyes aflame,
 And elfish locks that ne'er were polled with shears.

And he is left with Crawford at the cards :
 'Play,' cries the Earl, 'our old Saint Thomas friends'^{*}
 Would at the Lyndsay's beck absolve the fiends,
 Or woe betide them and their bonnet lairds.'

What sounds are these, unmeet for mortal ear ?
 Unearthly feet are heard upon the floors,
 Dread oaths traverse the dismal corridors,
 And men awake at the cold touch of Fear.

They start and listen, as perforce they must,
 To curses, groans, and yells, and fiendish laughter,
 That well may echo in their ears hereafter,
 Until the gates of sound are choked with dust.

* Note H. Our Old Saint Thomas' Friends.

But as the morning merges into day
 They gather in the hall, with faces pale,
 And gape in blank amazement at the tale
 Of guests and chamber disappeared for aye.

And ever since have strangers asked in Glamis,
 Is there a secret room where Crawford plays
 The losing cards, as old Tradition says,
 And still for trumps holds out imploring palms ?

A weird idea lieth underneath
 This legend of a soul cut off in sin,
 That keeps its wicked bias, and therein
 Finds fitting retribution after death.

LADY GLAMIS.

'TWOULD almost seem, unless there is a vein
 Of lightsome humour in a tragic tale,
 Like sunbeam in a dungeon, it may fail
 To touch our hearts that shrink from utter pain.

So, few will ask, Where is the doleful bower
 Of that most hapless lady, done to death
 By Perjury, while Judges held their breath,
 And feigned belief, by influence of Power ?

She was a daughter of that dreaded house*
 That held the minor King in thrall so long,
 Who, when enlarged, for such disloyal wrong,
 Pursued the race with hate so rancorous.

Her uncle, Angus, wedded to the Queen
 That Flodden made a widow, was divorced,
 Proscribed, and banished, and his kinsmen forced
 To flee, till not a Douglas durst be seen.

* Note L. Daughter of a Dreaded House.

Unsparing Vengeance, sprung of Hate and Fear,
 Sought to exterminate them, branch and root ;
 They sowed the seed, and reaped the bitter fruit—
 More fatal to their house than Percy's spear.

For now a lady of the hated race,
 Because she would not speak with bated breath,
 Must be accused of compassing the death
 Of that relentless King, so scant of grace.

Who, in despite of perjury confessed,
 Consigned the fairest of the Scottish dames
 To such a death—to perish in the flames ;
 For vengeful demons had his soul possessed.

And ruthless men were ever at his ear,
 That in the track of vengeance urged him on ;
 And in the ranks of knighthood there was none
 That for this 'silver heart' had help or cheer.*

And so she had to die ; and at the close,
 Without an earthly hope, she calmly stood,
 With nerves of steel, and gave the Douglas blood
 To the fierce flames, not fiercer than her foes.

Oh, Chivalry ! reverse thy arms for shame ;
 Throw down thy vaunted scutcheon of pretence,
 Miscalled, indeed, the shield of innocence ;
 Thou wert a sham, with a most famous name.

Will such misnomers cozen us for aye ?
 Must we be fenced with shams as with a pale,
 Lest evil over good should quite prevail,
 And man of Satan hold his house of clay ?

Seemed not such consummation imminent
 Full many a time in this distracted land,
 Where cruel heart ne'er wanted bloody hand,
 And ruthless deed still followed dire intent ?

When might was right, and knew not how to spare,
 The Scottish King for vengeance held the crown—
 The royal bard—but him the Nine disown,
 Who gave not right nor grace to lady fair.

Ah ! did the Fates requite the ruthless King ?
 He lost his sons, his power, his life, and left
 His kingdom to 'a lass,'* that was bereft
 Of crown and head—pearl of a luckless string.

But, hush ! we cannot fathom with our line
 Those wells of life, from ours so far apart,
 Nor test the waters by our chymic art,
 That flowed into the marshes of langsyne.

We may not scorn the rude old ages, now
 That we enjoy all light they have bequeathed ;
 We may not even, till the sword be sheathed,
 Reproach poor Cain, with blood-mark on his brow.

Our sages tell us, there are stars remote
 Whose distances are so immensely vast
 That light must long have left them—ages past—
 To shine upon us now—amazing thought !

And so in Time, the Past is present ever,
 With guiding light, and beacon's warning glow ;
 Its stars shine o'er us, onward as we go,
 And light our way to every new endeavour.

And so we love the rude antiquities,
 That bear the impress of the mortal hand ;
 We gaze upon them, while we heedless stand
 On pebbles rounded by primeval seas.

For why ? a fellow-feeling still we trace
 Through all our kind ; though it be weak and cold,
 It breaketh never, never waxeth old—
 The kindred tie that binds the human race.

Note K. His Kingdom to 'a Lass.'

NOTES TO GLAMIS CASTLE.

NOTE A, p. 1.—BATTLE HARNESS.

In the Stone Hall, the visitor meets, 'face to face,' several effigies in ancient armour, standing on the floor, which look somewhat ghostly in the dim light.

NOTE B, p. 1.—EMBROIDERED PICTURES.

These are new in the billiard room, a great modern hall, and whoever looks on them must admit that they are 'deftly wrought,' and must have required a great amount of time and 'patience' in the execution.

NOTE C, p. 2.—MACBETH, THANE OF GLAMIS.

Mr Andrew Jervise, of Brechin, author of 'The Land of the Lyndsay's,' &c., says in a published lecture on 'The History and Antiquities of Glamis':—'Some of you may be aware that the story of Macbeth being "Thane of Glamis" wants historical corroboration. Andrew Wyntown, the celebrated Prior of St Serf's Inch, Lochleven, says, on the contrary, that he was Thane of Cromarty and Moray. The story of his being Thane of Glamis was adopted by Shakspeare from the history of Hector Boece, the translation of which, by Bellenden, was the popular and acknowledged history of Scotland in the time of the great dramatist. The story of "the weird sisters" was first told by Wyntown; and according to him, as shown by the following lines, Macbeth, when he was with the King in a hunting seat, dreamt that he saw three women pass by:—

" And thai wemen, than thowcht he,
 Thre werd systrys maest lyk to be.
 The fyrist he hard say gangand by,
 ' So, yhondyr the Thayne of Crwmbawchty.'
 The tothir woman sayd agayne,
 ' Of Morave yhondyre I see the Thayne.'
 The third than sayd, ' I se the Kyng.'"

Nothing has, as yet, been found to disprove this statement by Wyntown; and, on the other hand, as nothing has come to light to shew that Macbeth was Thane of Glamis, the story of his having been such, which we have seen originated with Boece, must fall to be looked upon with doubt. But although there is nothing to shew that Macbeth was Thane of Glamis, we are certain that it was a Thanedom. There were several thanedoms in Forfarshire, among which were those of Glamis and Tannadice.'

NOTE D, p. 2.—TRUTH.

Truth was said by the ancients to lie at the bottom of a well.

NOTE E, p. 3.—ROYAL BRIDE OF GLAMIS.

John Lyon, First of Glamis, married a daughter of Robert II., about the year 1371. From this marriage is descended the present Earl of Strathmore.

NOTE F, p. 3.—THE LION GOBLET.

The great family drinking cup of Glamis, from which Sir Walter Scott took his idea of the family cup of Tully Veolin, 'The blessed Bear of Bradwardine.'

NOTE G, p. 4.—THE LYNDSAYS' MURDEROUS AMBUSH.

Buchanan states that John Lyon of Glamis was slain by the Lyndsays, who had been lying in wait, at the cross of Dundee. Mr Jervise, to whom I am indebted for the matter of these notes, says—'In 1382 Sir John Lyon of Glamis, and Sir James Lyndsay of Crawford, chief of his name, met in the moss of Balhall, in the parish of Menmuir, and engaging in single combat, Lyndsay proved the victor, and slew Lyon. The origin of the quarrel is now a mystery; but it is believed to have arisen from jealousy on the part of Lyndsay, who in his own late secretary, Sir John Lyon, whom he had introduced at Court, beheld one of the chief favourites of Robert II.' Neither the historian nor the antiquary state from what sources they derive their information, so the reader must just choose between them. I would only remark that single combat was rare among the Scottish barons. They seldom went abroad unattended, and their retainers were much of the same mind as the squire in the ballad of Chevy Chase, who says—

‘I would not have it told
To Hendry, my King, for shame,
That ever Lord Percy fought on foot,
And I stood looking on.’

NOTE H, p. 5.—OUR OLD SAINT THOMAS' FRIENDS.

The monks of the Abbey of Aberbrothock, which was dedicated to Saint Thomas à Becket by King William the Lion. The jurisdiction over the criminal affairs of the Abbey, and over its prison of regality, was resigned by the monks to a layman; and in the year 1445, the election to this office led to very disastrous consequences. The monks chose Alexander Lyndsay, son of the Earl of Crawford, afterwards known by the appellation of the Tiger Earl, or Earl Beardy, to be the Bailie, or chief Justiciar, of their regality. The Abbot and brethren of Saint Thomas soon found, to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, that they had caught a Tartar, and rashly resolved to get rid of him; so they appointed in his place Alexander Ogilvie of Inverquaharity, nephew of John Ogilvie of Airlie. This occasioned a cruel feud between the families; each assembled their vassals, and prepared to decide the question by battle. Sir Alexander Seton, afterwards Earl of Huntly, returning from Court, happened to lodge for the night at Inverquaharity when the baron was mustering his forces, and though not interested in the quarrel, found himself bound by ancient custom to espouse the cause of his host. With the small train of attendants and friends who accompanied him, he

joined the Ogilvies, and proceeding to Arbroath, they found the Lyndsays in great force outside the Abbey gates. As the hostile bands approached each other, the old Earl of Crawford suddenly appeared on the field, and galloping up between them, as a peacemaker, gave the redding stroke, a fatal spear thrust from an adherent of the Ogilvies. The Lyndsays, enraged at the death of their chief, attacked the Ogilvies with fury, and being assisted by a party of the vassals of Douglas, soon broke their ranks and reduced them to utter disorder. Such, however, was the gallantry of their resistance that they were almost entirely cut to pieces. Nor was the loss which the Ogilvies sustained in the field their worst misfortune, for Lyndsay, with characteristic ferocity, let loose his victorious followers upon their estates, and the burning of their castles, the slaughter of their vassals, and the captivity of their wives and children, shewed how terrible was the vengeance of the Tiger Earl, the ghostly gambler of Glamis. Well might his old Saint Thomas' friends fear their savage Justiciar. The baron of Inverquharity was wounded in the pursuit, and carried to Findhaven, where he died.

NOTE I. p. 6.—DAUGHTER OF A DREADED HOUSE.

The widowed Lady of the sixth Lord Glamis married Campbell of Skipnish. The castle of Skipnish is in Kintyre, Argyllshire. She was burned to death on the Castlehill of Edinburgh in 1537. She was a Douglas by birth, granddaughter of the celebrated Earl of Angus, surnamed Bell-the-Cat. Her two brothers and an uncle were banished, and their estates forfeited, by the Parliament of 1528. Death was the penalty to all who should assist or harbour the proscribed. King James V. had sworn that while he lived the Douglas family should never find refuge in Scotland. Lady Glamis, with the feelings of a sister and a niece, disregarded his prohibition, and shielded and succoured her distressed kinsmen. For this she was brought to trial in 1527, but proceedings seem to have been relinquished against her at that time, and subsequently in 1532, when she was charged with taking away the life of her late husband by intoxication—an expression evidently referring to her alleged dealing in enchanted drugs, filters, charms, &c. Still, although both these charges were departed from, kingly vengeance was not to be foiled; and a third time she was committed for trial, along with her eldest son, Lord Glamis, her husband, Campbell of Skipnish, John Lyon of Knockeny, and an old priest. They were all imprisoned in the Castle of Edinburgh, charged with conspiring against the life of the King. Lady Glamis was tried before an assize of fifteen jurymen, composed of some of the most celebrated barons of the age, all strangers to this district, with the exception of David Barclay of Mathers, in the Mearns. The unfortunate lady, who is described as 'the most celebrated beauty of the nation, of solid judgment, affable and engaging to her inferiors as well as equals,' defended herself with uncommon eloquence. After denying the charges preferred against her, she concluded by pleading for the lives of those implicated along with her, in these remarkable words:—'Seeing that my chief crime is that I am descended of the family of Douglas, there is no reason that they should be involved in my ruin, for my

husband, son, and cousin, are neither of that name or family. I shall end my life with more comfort if you absolve them ; for the more of us that suffer by your unjust sentence, the greater will be your guilt, and the more terrible your condemnation when you shall be tried at the great day by the Almighty God, who is the impartial judge of all flesh.' Still, although her noble defence had such an effect on the minds of the jury as to make them delay their verdict, and recommend Lady Glamis to mercy, the King remained unmoved, and she, being convicted of having been 'act and part' in the 'treasonable crimes,' as they are designated, of 'conspiration and ymaginacione of the slauchter and destructione of our souvrane lordis maist nobill persone, be poysone,' and of assisting Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, and George Douglas, 'her brother,' was declared to have forfeited her life and her inheritance, and was ordered 'to be had to the Castelhill of Edinburghe, and their be byrnt in ane fire to the deid, as ane traytour.' This barbarous judicial murder took place amidst the tears and lamentations of a crowd of sympathising spectators, who, it is stated, but for the presence of the King's officers and guard, would have attempted to rescue the victim. On the day after the murder of the hapless lady, her husband, Campbell of Skipnish, in attempting to make his escape over the castle walls, fell from the rocks and was killed by the fall. Their old chaplain was released, but the boy Lord Glamis, who was sentenced to be 'hangit and drawn,' was kept a prisoner until the death of King James. The daughters were also in captivity for a few months after the death of their mother. The Lord Treasurer expended on their behalf the sum of four shillings and twopence Scots, for 'twa pair doubill solit schone.' 'The principal witness for the crown, in this nefarious trial, was William Lyon, a relative of the family, who, struck with remorse, confessed afterwards to the King that he had been guilty of perjury, and was suffered to leave the kingdom.' For all that, it will be observed that James relaxed but little in his indiscriminate vengeance, for though he spared the life of the young Lord Glamis he still kept him a close prisoner. It was not till after the King's death that he was set free, and obtained possession of his forfeited estates. The whole of this affair is an indelible blot on the memory of James V. It may be allowed him in extenuation, that the Douglasses, while they kept him in compulsory tutelage, repressed his good, and fostered his evil qualities, neglected his proper education, and exasperated him by the basest indignities ; but still we must say, that if he was trained in an evil school, he proved himself an apt scholar. It was not long till he had other rebellious barons besides the Douglasses, and met with other misfortunes and wrongs, heavier than those he had so ruthlessly avenged.

NOTE J, p. 7.—SILVER HEART.

The silver heart was the cognisance of the Douglasses after Sir James was sent with the heart of Robert Bruce, in a silver case, to the Holy Land, which he never reached.

NOTE K, p. 8.—HIS KINGDOM TO 'A LASS.'

When James V. was dying, he was told of the birth of a daughter. He murmured, 'It—the crown—"cam wi' a lass, and it will gae wi' a lass.'

LAMENT OF THE COUNTESS OF STRATHMORE

FOR HER HUSBAND, ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH. HE WAS STABBED BY CARNEGIE OF FINDHAVEN IN 1727, ON THE STREETS OF FORFAR, AND DIED OF HIS WOUNDS IN HIS CASTLE OF GLAMIS.

THE morning breaketh cold and grey,
With dewy tears on every leaf,
And all is hushed in gloomy calm—
Meet dawning for this fatal day,
When bleed afresh the wounds of grief,
That Time can bring no healing calm.

Here, from the lofty towers of Glamis,
I look abroad on wide Strathmore,
And see our lands far spreading lie ;
But, ah ! the banished, craving alms
From aliens on a foreign shore,
Are not of joy forlorn as I.

A year hath passed—sad year to me :
Since he, my own dear lord, was slain :
And sore bemoaned by kith and kin,
This day to grief will sacred be ;
This day will thousands curse again
The hand that wrought the deadly sin.

A year I've worn this sad array,
Secluded from the world apart—
The living by the dead possest ;
And, ever till my dying day,
I'll chamber in my inmost heart
The liege lord of my loyal breast.

His lifeless picture from the wall
Looks smiling on me while I weep,
As he himself had never done :
This painted counterfeit is all,
Oh, this is all that earth can keep
Of my dear lord, that's dead and gone.

Oh, he was well beloved by all,
By high and low, by old and young,
All but the basest of the base,—
So good and kind, in hut and hall,
His praise the theme of every tongue,
The gentlest of a noble race.

It was not for an ancient name,
Or princely hall, or wide domain,
Or arms with royal quarterings,—
That he had this, his meed of fame,—
A man among his fellow-men,
Ennobled by the King of kings.

Oh, woe is me ! my heart's dear love,
My crown of joy, that God me gave,
So fearfully was reft away ;
And I, who cried to heaven above,—
Oh, vainly prayed, to heal and save,—
I live to see this doleful day.

Oh, woe is me ! oftentimes distraught,
I ope yon dreary chamber door ;
What is it there my sight appals ?
With blood my burning eyes are fraught ;
And red the light on bed and floor,
That through the stainless casement falls.

Again, I hear the tramp of horse ;
I hear the hum of many men ;
I see *him* borne into the hall ;—
I clasp the dead—a lifeless corse,
I clasp within my arms again,
And on the cold clay wailing call.

My God, thou art my sole relief ;
Until thou lett'st me part in peace,
These towers are but my living tomb :
Oh, pardon me my sins of grief,
Oh, blessed Jesu', grant me grace
To meet him in his heavenly home !

THE DEIL IN LOVE.

'E'en Satan glowl'd and fidg'd fu' fain.'—BURNS.

'The halydays o' Yule were come,
And the nights were lang and mirk.'

LANGSYNE, upon a winter night,
A horseman rode toward the light
Set in a winnock o' the Chance Inn,*
To guide the weary wight advancin' ;
But light or dark, through muir or fiel',
Gude faith, he kenned the way fu' weel
To baith the towns, and our halfway-house,
And ilka biggin', ha', and clay-house :
O' a' the joes o' Effie Miller
He was the warst that e'er gaed till her.

Now Effie was a winsome dame
As ever Poet gave to fame ;
A sonsy, lo'esome, wanton quean,
Wi' rosy cheeks and roving een ;
Wi' gowden locks sae bright and bonnie,
And woman's wiles fu' sweet and mony ;
Wi' tempting lips and dimples gay—
Come, kiss me now ! she seemed to say ;
For in her bonnie bosom white
There lay a loving heart and light ;
And, wi' a voice sae sweet and rare,
She sang a lullaby to care ;
A wanton widow, blythe and cheerie,
O' weeds and widowhood fu' wearie.

She vaunted she was fancy free,
Though she had wooers twa or three.
There was a Deacon frae the Toun—
I trow he might have spared his shoon ;
But for the sake o' Effie Miller
He lo'ed her very gear and siller :

* Note A. Old Chance Inn.

The strongest potion he would quaff
 Was ae degree aboon the draff—
 A greedy, grovelling, snuffy carl,
 She wadna haen him for the warl.'

The Miller neist, frae Lunan Water,
 A rattling chiel, was daft about her ;
 He liket weel to plunge his snout
 I' the glorious faem o' double stout,
 And to her health he toomed the bicker,
 His love was hearty as his liquor.

The Dominie o' Inverkeillor
 Could think o' nought but Effie Miller,
 He clean forgot his books and lear,
 And sang o' Effie's gowden hair ;
 When a' the lave were sleepin' soun'
 He chanted to the listening moon ;
 And often at the midnight hour,
 By auld Redcastle's haunted tower,
 An eerie echo sang again
 The burthen o' his canty strain :—

THE DOMINIE'S SANG.

There's no a lass in a' the land
 Wi' Effie can compare ;
 Atween the Lunan and the Tweed
 There's no a face so fair.
 It haunts me aye by night and day,
 The cause o' a' my care,
 And ever glancin' in my een,
 Her bonnie gowden hair.

I look upon her bonnie face
 To read the dimples there,
 And canna look on ither book,
 Or think o' ither lear ;
 But wanderланely out at e'en
 Or lie in lowly lair,
 Entwining ever round my heart
 Her bonnie gowden hair.

I saw her on Saint Ringan's day
 A' buskin' for the fair,
 And ever syne she's in my een,
 And buskin' evermair.

Her locks o' light hing waving down
 Upon her bosom fair—
 A glowin' dawn on hills o' snaw,
 Her bonnie gowden hair.

The mean may creep, the proud may climb,
 The rich may plod for mair,
 And gallant sigh, in silken chain,
 For love o' ladye fair ;
 Gie me but Effie in my arms,
 I'm rich beyond compare—
 A willing thrall in glittering bands
 O' bonnie gowden hair !

He was inspired, ye may believe it,
 By Effie and her pure Glenlivet ;
 Nae milk-and-water coof was he,
 His love was like the barley bree
 Distilled and pure—or like the gold
 Transmuted by adepts of old—
 A rare compound of pleasing pain,
 Sublimed by fancy in the brain
 Till ilka thrill o' sweet temptation
 Was heavenly in imagination ;
 But frae the barley comes the bree,—
 Alas for love's divinity !

Fu' mony joes had Effie Miller,—
 Some lo'ed the woman, some the siller ;
 The wildest rake amang them a'
 Was couper Tam o' Glasterlaw,
 And 'Deil' was printed in his look
 As plain as in this printed book :
 Poor Effie's heart was in a swither,
 Or whiles wi' ane and whiles anither :
 It wasna lang till she had fewer ;
 But turn we to the unco wooer.

The stranger was a stalwart chiel,
 Wha graced his coat and bonnet weel,
 Wi' curly hassock thick and black,
 And brawny arms and buirdly back ;

His piercin' een and visage swart
 Wad made a skeerie maiden start ;
 But Effie met him frank and free,
 Wi' mickle kindly courtesie.

She set him by a blazing ingle,
 And ferlied if he might be single ;
 She lightly skippit butt and ben,
 And neither mindit maids nor men,
 But frae the kitchen to the spence
 Returning aye on slight pretence :
 For as the glowing taper brings
 The fluttering moth to burn its wings,
 The dyvor loon bewitched her clean,
 And cuist the glamour in her een.

' The sugared words and feingings fause'
 Beguileth mony a simple lass ;
 The glittering gowd and tempting gear
 Bewitcheth mony a lady fair ;
 But mony a dame, ye weel may trow,
 Has been bewitched and wist nae how ;
 And brawly kenned this prowling guiser
 That Effie was nae whit the wiser ;
 He plied his wiles and speeches fine,
 He made her drink the bluid-red wine ;
 And, as he pressed her willing hand,
 He tauld her o' his rigs o' land—
 That he was laird o' Pandemonie,
 A lightsome place it was and bonnie ;
 That he had flocks a-feeding there,
 As mony as my lord and mair ;
 And how the pleasant river Styx
 Was flowing by his garden dykes ;
 She widna need to kilt her coat,
 But cross in Charon's bonnie boat ;
 His kin wad a' be glad to see her ;
 Sae happy as he wad be wi' her ;
 He wanted ane he liket weel
 To share his dry and cozy biel.—
 A smile was on her bonnie face,

She wistna o' her waefu' case ;
 He pu'd her down upon his knee—
 A bauld and graceless loon was he—
 And aye he clasp'd her yielding waist,
 And aye her glowin' lips he kiss'd.

Oh, fie ! Auld Nick, thou shameless devil !
 Wad thou at hame but riot and revel,
 And be content to bear the bell
 'Mang gruesome cattle like thyself' ;
 But thou maun sport in our Half-way House,
 At kirk and market, court and play-house ;
 And not a thought can man be thinkin',
 But thou maun ha'e a sinfu' link in ;
 And not a fause card can he turn up,
 But thou maun grin and cock thy horn up ;
 And not a drap can cross his weason,
 But thou maun drug wi' tempting poison ;
 And not a lass can he be courtin',
 But thou maun ha'e thy tithe o' sportin'.
 Ah ! little wot we o' thy amours,
 In lonesome ways and secret chaumers ;
 In guise of noble or of clown,
 In lowly lair or bed of down,
 Wi' silly maiden, wife, or widow,
 Oh ! wha could tell the ills that ye do ?

When once the eye of deadly snake
 Hath charmed the sweet bird in the brake,
 The little fearful fluttering thing
 Can wave no more its quivering wing,—
 So Effie trembled in his arms,
 And leapt her heart with vague alarms,
 That shivering through her veins would creep,
 As mystic fear in dreamy sleep.
 Awakening into terror slowly,
 She quailed beneath his looks unholy ;
 His eyeballs bright and brighter grew,
 The waning light grew dim and blue,
 When, hark ! his steed doth tramp and neigh :
 'The hour is come, I must away ;

My tale is told, my tryst is set,
 And my true love will ne'er forget,—
 He whispered, like a serpent's hiss,
 And scorched her with a parting kiss ;
 But now from his unhallowed breath
 She shrank in horror strong as death.

The grey cock clapt his wings and crew—
 Away the fearful horseman flew ;
 The phantom courser, swift as light
 Careering on the skirts of night—
 His glowing breath in lurid gleams,
 Flashed lightning on the foaming streams ;
 And flew the fire-flaughts from his feet,
 On hounds of darkness, staunch and fleet ;
 While, heard afar, his tramp of thunder,
 As if the rocks were cleft asunder :
 Now auld Redcastle, grim and bare,
 Was lighted up with ghastly glare ;
 And ilk haunted tower gave out
 Its goblin-fiend to join the rout,
 And ilk houff its ghastly crew,
 As hellward-bound away he flew.

PART SECOND.

WHEN Boreas blusters o'er the ocean,
 The waves are up in wild commotion,
 And, when the furious wind is spent,
 Still heaves the troubled element ;
 So heaved the tide o' mortal fear,
 And fouk their beatin' hearts could hear,
 When silence down upon them fell—
 They kenn'd, tho' not a tongue could tell,
 That bogles haunted ilk house,
 That a' the fiends o' hell were loose.
 Nae thocht was then o' sport and game,—
 The sturdy guisers sped them hame,
 Through bogs and holes, nae time to tent them,
 Unearthly feet were hard ahint them—

Auld bodies thocht the *end* was come,
 And lookit for the day o' doom ;
 While mony a whispered prayer was said,
 By wee things happit o'er the head ;
 And mony a lassie in her fright,
 Clung to the lad she lo'ed that night,
 And in the clasp o' fear revealed
 What maiden pride had lang concealed.

But, up at last, the lazy sun
 Looked through his sleety curtains dun,
 And terror vanished at the sight
 Of Phœbus' deil-defying light ;
 And Yule, in spite o' fear or care,
 Began wi' fun and feasting rare.

But lang before the day was done,
 A rumour flew frae toun to toun,
 O' something awfu' at the Chance Inn,
 And elders lang that day the manse in :
 While some said ae thing, some anither,
 'Twas fearfu' mystery a'thegither ;
 For tales o' devilry were tauld
 That made the very bluid rin cauld ;
 And tauld again, in variorum,
 By Tullys o' the rustic forum :
 But a' agreed that Effie Miller,
 Had got a fright was like to kill her.

Again the sun was out o' sight,
 And down in darkness fell the night ;
 The Christmas fires were blazing cheerily,
 And groups around them meeting merrily ;
 But not a soul gaed near the Chance Inn,
 For fun or frolic, drink or dancin' ;
 The door was barred, and butt or ben
 Were nane that night but haly men.

Poor Effie, pillow'd in her chair,
 Was ten year aulder like, and mair :
 But yesterday a buxom widow,

Now scarcely o' hersel' the shadow.
 On ilka side, a haly elder,
 Each by a hand they firmly held her ;
 The minister himsel' was there—
 Could ony sinner wish for mair ?

I maist forgot an interloper,
 The reckless deil-may-care, the Couper ;
 They kenned him for a very heathen,
 Wha ghaists and deils put little faith in ;
 But troth, the birkie saw the light,
 And swore he would be in that night.
 They shawed but little welcome for him,
 But, right or wrang, he joined the quorum :
 He volunteered, and that was civil,
 For Effie he would face the Devil !

She lookit round, bewildered quite,
 Wi' looks o' strange unearthly light
 (They prayed she might be granted grace) ;
 Anon, a change came o'er her face :
 Her een, that were so wild and bright,
 Grew dark beneath their lids so white ;
 The listener could not hear her breath,
 As life put on the mask of death :
 Again returning thoughts would come,
 As spectres starting from the tomb,
 And fears that madness could not smother,
 Wi' cauld sweat and convulsive shudder—
 She lay, as one in terror dying ;
 As guilty wretch in durance lying,
 Foreboding more than pains of death,
 The while he shares his dungeon breath
 With loathsome things that round him crawl ;
 And on the damp and slimy wall
 He steeps his lank and tangled hair,—
 Unnoted all in his despair—
 He sees beyond the hour of doom,
 While gleams of horror light the gloom.

But, hark ! like sounds of distant war,
 The storm-fiend, in his rattling car,
 Now booming on from cloud to cloud,
 Now whistling, wi' his blast so loud ;
 The lightning flashed, and streamed, and quivered,
 The murky clouds were rent and shivered,
 With pealing, crashing, rattling thunder,
 The stedfast hills were shaken under ;
 The elements so fiercely battled
 That doors and windows shook and rattled,
 And black as ink the rain came down
 The hissing, smouldering fire to drown :
 Now on the dusky kipple-taps
 Wee devils hung like sooty draps,
 Or squealed like rottens i' the nook :
 The trembling watchers feared to look ;
 The stifling reek was like to smore them,
 And black infernal drift fell o'er them,
 While i' the gloom, their haggard faces
 They screwed in horrible grimaces,
 And wildly glared on ane anither
 Till a' grew deils and ghaists thegither.

Then came a strange and sudden lull,
 More terrible than storm ; so still
 That they could hear the death-watch beat,
 And cricket chirping at their feet :
 A little while—and a' were dumb,
 They kenned the enemy was come ;
 The cauld sweat burst from every pore,
 But harrowing suspense was o'er,
 And fainting nature, overstrained,
 Was now by faith and hope sustained.

And there he stood, the very Deil
 In mortal shape, bedizened weel—
 Arrayed in ghastly habs complete :
 His sark was o' the winding-sheet
 (But doubtless fumigated weel) ;
 His cravat o' the silken tweel,
 Ta'en frae a desperate cheat-the-wuddy,

Dyed i' the red gash deep and bluidy ;
 His brooch a living salamander,
 Set in a frame o' glowin' cinder ;
 His coat and breeks o' velvet pall,
 Weel fashioned by a tailor's saul ;
 And then his shapeless cloven cloots
 Were thrust in bluidy pirate's boots ;
 His gloves in molten sulphur tanned,
 Each feately peeled frae dead man's hand ;
 And scalps of savage men he wore
 Glued on his head wi' clots of gore ;
 But through this mock of mortal state
 • Shot gleams of malice, scorn, and hate ;
 His een were like twin stars of bale,
 Plucked from the sunless vault of hell.

He claimed his Bride : all wan she lay,
 A living thing of senseless clay ;
 He claimed her as his bounden thrall ;
 He claimed her body and her saul.
 A ring lay on the table broken :
 ' See, she is mine by pledge and token !'

The haly man was granted grace—
 Wi' faith an' fervour glowed his face ;
 He laid his hand upon The Book
 So calmly, not a finger shook :
 ' Now be that candle burning low
 An emblem of her weal or woe ;
 When that is burned, if lost she be,
 Take what's permitted unto thee—
 Till then in power of grace she lies.'
 ' Amen ! ' the sneering fiend replies.
 Oh, then ! as thought—as lightning quick,
 His rev'rence seized the candlestick,
 And in an ecstacy did swallow
 The glowing candle, wick, and tallow !

But mortal tongue wad fail to tell
 The hurly-burly that befel ;
 For a' the house was in a bleeze,

And a' the folk like smokit bees.
Fu' lang the country made a ~~clatter~~ o't ;
But, faith the widow got the better o't :
The Couper courted her for a' that,
His cloven foot she never saw ~~that~~.
Waes me for bonny Effie Miller !
He grieved her sair, and spent her siller :
The Devil couldna frame a plan
To scare a widow frae a man :
Her roses soon began to fade,
And aftentimes the neebours said,
'The Couper stood in Satan's shoon—
She gat a deil when a' was done.'

Now, Woman ! hear my warning voice :
Gude help thee in thy wilfu' choice ;
For thou wilt slight a worthy true love,
And thou wilt choose a worthless new love,
And thou wilt smile on him sae kindly,
And wink and blink and love him blindly,—
While every simple soul may see
A devil in disguise but thee !

NOTE TO THE DEIL IN LOVE.

The old 'Chance Inn,' or Half-Way House, as it was sometimes called, was situated, langayne, on the road between Arbroath and Montrose. On the completion of the new turnpike, the old inn became a farm-house, and the new 'Chance Inn' was built at Inverkeillor, which soon after became a considerable village. The old hostel is now part and parcel of the steading of the small farm which still retains the name of 'Chance Inn,' a more commodious dwelling-house having been erected some thirty or forty years ago. On the old gable facing the road may still be seen a stone panel, whereon was sculptured a shield with the arms of the family of Northesk. Whether or not the 'Deil' caroused in the 'old Chance Inn,' is more than I can affirm; but if he patronised unlawful liquor, there was plenty of smuggled gin in the old Half-Way House. It is well known, however, that he once kicked up a terrible row at the barn of Redcastle, in the immediate neighbourhood. It seems he had coveted the soul of some poor dying sinner, who had been housed in the barn. The presence of the 'Enemy' was so fearfully manifested that the minister of Lunan had to be summoned in extremity. The holy man exorcised the Fiend, and outwitted him so completely, that in his rage at being baffled and ~~done~~ so cleverly out of his intended prey, he vanished, in fire and brimstone of course, taking the gable of the barn out with him in his flight. That same night a stranger arrived at the 'Chance Inn' who frightened the landlady, Effie Miller, out of her wits. Thus the reader may perceive that I have not raised a superstructure without foundation; the evil one being but too well acquainted with the neighbourhood of the old Chance Inn.

THE GAME PRESERVE IN GIBB'S CLOSE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE LAIRD.

IN a certain town not a hundred miles from the Tay, there dwelt, not long ago, a queer old shoemaker, named ~~Francis~~ Gibb, who, on account of his peculiarities, was a well-known character. It was surmised by many that Francie slept in his leathern apron, but the more judicious demurred to that notion, as they could not conceive how he could undress at night without divesting himself of his leathern appendage. A sleeved waistcoat of dusky moleskin enveloped his upper half ; and his nether moiety was cased in the same material. On his noddle he wore, by night and day, a greasy nightcap, the original colour of which was supposed to have been red. His face had the dirt spread over it once a-week—with a little soap and water—spread right round by his ears—the carved line of demarcation being strongly drawn round by the neck, and the hollows of his countenance on both sides always left in the shade. As for his hands, they were always comfortably gloved with a compound of blacking, rosin, and dubbin.

Francie was a bachelor, as you may suppose, and lived alone in his den, where, undisturbed by scrubbing women, and prowling cats, he indulged his hobby to his heart's content. His whole delight was in a little menagerie of birds and beasts—canaries, pigeons, game-cocks, ferrets, and terriers. His fondness for dogs and ferrets gave some colour to reports that he had been addicted to poaching in his youth ; but whatever might be his opinion on the game laws, he had never come in contact with the Justices. ‘Na, na,’ Francie would say, ‘it’s no worth riskin’ fines and expenses for sic a sma’ matter as a hare or a partralik, and get an ill name besides. Nane would rin the risk but a fule.’

There is no accounting for men’s hobbies, as they seem often opposed to their ordinary dispositions. You may see a sober, peaceable, and otherwise sensible man waiting anxiously for the arrival of ‘Bell’s Life,’ eager to devour its news of the prize-ring ; quite indifferent, in comparison,

to the most important national intelligence. You may see another—perhaps a grey-haired man—with a little fancy puppy, whistling for it, and coaxing it to follow him ; running into entries after it, and finally obliged to take the provoking thing out of the gutter and carry it ; ay, and rather than part with the nuisance, he will even pay the dog-tax, although he has more need to put a good pair of shoes on his feet. This man, too, may be otherwise a sensible man. Again, you may see a wealthy man, a landowner, who, from youth to old age, has ridden after hares, and trudged, with gun in hand, after birds, and spent the best part of his income on hounds and hunters, as if he had been ushered into this serious, responsible existence for no higher purpose than to become a superior sort of hound, whose nature it is to prey on the weaker animals ; yet this man, too, shall we say, may be otherwise a sensible man. Here is an educated man, who possesses the means of doing much good ; and, but for his monomania, he might have done good service to his country and his kind. But you may also see a poor man, that no measure of disrespect, fine, or imprisonment, can deter from riding this same hobby in his poor, miserable, prowling way, though it often lands him into the court and the jail. Now, we can scarcely call him a sensible man, because he risks far too much for his hobby. 'He pays too dear for his whistle.' Surely there must be some fascination in this sporting mania that we—who are beyond the pale of the kennel—cannot comprehend, for we have always looked upon it as the merest shred or remnant of barbarism, and of which, in our day, civilized men ought to be ashamed. We must surely be mistaken, for grave and venerable legislators rush out on the twelfth of August, like schoolboys at the vacation, to enjoy the sport. That they do enjoy game, both on the field and at the table, the game preserving system proves without doubt. We have few Squire Westerns now who make it the business of their lives, but we beat the old squires out-and-out in preserving, for they did not make the police of the country their game-keepers, and tax the people for their wages. That was reserved for the crowning impudence of the *intellectual* landowners of the nineteenth century. This brazen piece of policy is looked on by the people at large with fully as much contempt as indignation—a sign that the game laws are sunk beneath the dignity of reason, and that their staunch supporters have lowered them down to ridicule and scorn ; very unwholesome strata for laws to exist in.

Turn we now from this digression, not altogether irrelevant, to our friend Francie Gibb, who was destined to set his native town a-laughing at the game laws of Great Britain. Young Francie, as he was called in his father's

lifetime, was the only son of his father, Old Francie, who, by dint of many year's working and saving, had become owner of several old houses running back from the street. The entry leading to these wretched tenements was known as Gibb's Close. At the top of the close was an old dingy shop ; over the low doorway was the remains of a sign-board, on which those who had good eyes might read, 'Francis Gibb, Boot and Shoemaker.' Old Francie had been gone long ago ; Young Francie had now become old. He never married, as we said, and as he grew in years he became more and more solitary ; his shop grew more dingy and dismal ; his trade left him, or rather he and his trade seemed to part with mutual consent, until a little cobbling for his tenants and neighbours was all his employment, and the care of his pet animals all his recreation. The rents of the close were more than sufficient for his wants ; he was not a grasping landlord, and never spoke of raising rents unless his tenants bothered him for repairs. Any patching that he could do himself was willingly done, but tradesmen's accounts were his utter aversion, and so the houses came to be almost in a ruinous state ; and the tenants, of course, were poor people, and some of them occasionally at variance with the law. Francie cared little for that, if they did not fall back with their weekly or monthly rents. Few of them could be trusted to pay by the half-year. Landlord and tenants got on pretty well together on the whole. The hovels were cheap. The laird was his own factor. He employed no lawyers. Defaulters met his grumbling with fearful complaints of rats and bugs, and leaky roofs or broken floors, till they silenced him, and got a respite for a time. Such was the way of the world in Gibb's Close.

CHAPTER SECOND.

FRANCIE IN HIS DEN.

Few of Francie's customers got beyond the little workshop in front. The door of communication that led into the interior domicile had a check-lock that never got rusty for want of use. He kept no seat but his stool in the shop, lest he should give encouragement to gossips. When he was annoyed too long by a standing bore, he retreated without ceremony into his sanctum, closing the door behind him. The visitor might leave when he got wearied. There was nothing there to tempt the cupidity of rogues. I was one of the few who had the *entree* into the interior, and well remember my first introduction to the snarling terriers, who seemed determined to resent my intrusion. The

gloomy, unventilated den, was pervaded with an indescribable smell, like the foetid odour of a menagerie of wild animals. I tried to conceal my repugnance, being curious to see the *habitat* of this queer original. I was ushered into what had been the kitchen, but was now a mere lumber room, crammed with old dilapidated furniture, which had been left, perforce, in his houses, by defaulting tenants. There was but a narrow passage between the door and the fireplace, which was surrounded by a great accumulation of ashes, that almost concealed the legs of an old armchair fixed between the jambs and a deal table. The table was covered with dust, soot, stale bread crumbs, herring bones, potato peelings, and lots of greasy garbage, amid which were various dirty dishes. The chimney shelf was much the same, but garnished in addition with candle ends and dirty tobacco pipes. A kettle hung over a smoky fire. The smoke went everywhere but up the chimney. The soot fell around in black flakes, and lay thick and undisturbed wherever it fell. 'This place is cumbert wi' auld things,' said Francie apologetically. 'Come ye this way, whaur there's mair room.' So saying, he led the way to the bon room, which, but for the all-pervading dirt, might have had a comfortable appearance. The walls were papered, but the paper looked as old as the house. The floor was carpeted, but the carpet had no visible pattern. Dust and dirt spread over all a dingy uniformity. There was no fire in the rusty grate. 'I keep a fire here in the winter nights, and mak mysel' comfortable,' said the old bachelor, cheerily. I could not but think how strangely various are men's ideas of comfort. 'You have plenty of reading material here for the winter nights,' I remarked, pointing to a heap of old books on the table. 'Tut, man, that's but a sample o' the stock,' he replied, opening an old press that reached to the ceiling. It was filled with old books, bought cheap, as he told me, at auctions and book-stalls, during the last half century. I made some remarks on the contents of some of them, and found by his answers that he had been a devourer of books, but had digested very little of his multifarious reading. There were also several piles of cheap periodicals. I found, to my surprise, that Francie was extremely fond of their sensational stories. There were likewise several newspapers lying about, and I wondered then if their pages did not elicit some idea in that addled brain of the incongruity of his stagnant life with the moving panorama of the onward world. But no thought of the kind, as I could gather from after observation, seemed ever to have entered his mind, or, at least, ever found expression in his words. He seemed to be sensible, however, that his non-conformity with the usages of society had placed him beyond the bounds of ordinary intercourse.

With his neighbours, and invalidated his title to the respect of his townsmen, though they knew him to be a man of property. From a consciousness of this he was shy and reserved, seldom looked you in the face when he spoke to you, seemed restless, and anxious to be rid of your company that he might bury himself alone in his den. I soon saw, by his answers to others, that he could not abide any allusion to his mode of life; so, by ignoring his peculiarities altogether, and seeming to take no note of anything I saw about him or his dwelling, we became very friendly. When I remarked once, in the course of conversation, that it was as base to carry away household secrets as any other household property, he declared emphatically that I was the most sensible young man in the town. By and bye, I gained Francie's entire confidence, and was the only visitor who was always welcome. He would even chide me when I stayed too long away. I had the use of his old books, which he allowed me to take home to read at my leisure. Many of them were rare and curious, though the most of them, it must be owned, were sad rubbish. Thus the old man and I got on most agreeably during the two last years of my apprenticeship. Shortly after my time was served, I was advised to go for a year or two and improve myself in my trade by working in one of the great centres of trade. Old Francie almost cried when I took leave of him. 'I'll be mair lanely than ever now, Charlie,' he said. 'I've been sae lang used wi' you comin' to the house that I'll miss you sairly. Somehow, there's nae ither body that I care to see here. Haste ye back again, lad, sin' ye're determined to gae. If ye bide lang awa ye'll no see Auld Francie when ye come back. I'll likely dee alane here some day. Nane will be sorry for me. But I wrang ye, lad. I do believe you wad be sad to hear that the auld man was gane. Rin awa now, and no lat's get downhearted; and be sure to wreat.' I promised faithfully, shook his hard hand, and departed, somewhat sad at leaving my strange old friend, Francie Gibb.

CHAPTER THIRD.

THE COMING CHANGE.

I HAD been three years away from home—one in Glasgow and two in London,—and during all that time had heard but little of Gibb's Close and its owner. I wrote him several letters descriptive of English ways and customs, but expected no answer, and got none. I knew that Francie could write, and make out an account tolerably well in his

old fashioned way, but questioned if he ever wrote a letter in his life. As correspondence cannot be carried on singly, I had long ceased to write, and sent a newspaper now and then instead of a letter. In answer to my enquiries, my sister would sometimes tell me in her letters that Francie Gibb was living in his old way. She informed me that he had called sometimes, enquiring when the old folks had word from me—a most surprising circumstance in their eyes, as he had never been known to pay friendly visits before. Otherwise they observed no change in his manner. I had at length acceded to their repeated requests to come home. By this time wages were higher in my native town. The expense of living was higher too, but still much lower than in London. Truth to speak, I was getting tired of lodgings, and was longing for the home-fireside, and to see the old familiar faces. About this time I had a letter from my sister Maggie—my usual correspondent—all about Francie Gibb, and a strange change that had come over him. After telling me that they were all well at home, she wrote:—‘Your friend Francie Gibb, it is said, is gone wrong in his mind. On Monday last he did not open his door, nor take off his shutters, and the neighbours wondered what could be the reason. They thought he must be ill, as he never neglected to open his shop before. They rapped on the door, and called out his name, but got no answer; then they proposed to get a policeman to break open the door, but somebody said that could not be done without a warrant. Well, by this time there was a little mob about the door, when Mrs Benson came running out of her house and told them that Francis was feeding his ferrets in his yard; and that she saw him through her back window. Then some of the mob ran into Mrs Benson’s and looked through the window and saw him in the yard, and cried to him to open his shop, but he gave them no answer. They said that he looked scowling up to them, and then went into his house, shutting the door, and they saw him no more that day. He opened his shop next morning; but when folks went in and asked him what was the matter with him yesterday that he did not open his shop, he got angry, they said, and told them to mind their own business. When he got them away he came out again and put on his shutters. He has never taken them off since that day; that is four days ago. He has been seen in his yard every day, they say, from Mrs Benson’s window, which, you know, is opposite his back door. He has been several times, Mrs Kydd told me, in her shop for provisions, and when she asked him why he did not open his shop now, he told her, as he told the rest of the neighbours, to mind her own business. Every day this week there have been folks rapping at his door, but he would neither open

it, nor give them any answer when they called out his name. I hear that Mr Brown, the home missionary, was advised to call upon him, but he would not let him in, nor speak to him. So the case stands at present. Everybody is wondering how he will do about his weekly rents this Saturday afternoon—whether he will open his door to them that come to pay him, or call at their houses for payment. I will leave my letter open till I hear about that, and tell you what I hear, and then close it in time for the evening mail.

‘Well, two or three in the close have got a disappointment, for it seems they were thinking that as Francie would not open his door now they would get off without paying rent, so they resolved not to go with it, and hoped that he was too far gone in his mind to seek it. But when Mrs Scott and Nelly Mitchell went as usual about three o'clock they knocked at the door, and got no answer at first, but when they cried that they had come to pay their rent, he half opened the door and told them that he would come to their houses for it at six o'clock, and bade them tell their neighbours the same thing. Sure enough at six o'clock he called at their houses, and told them all that he would call at the same hour every Saturday. When John Howie said, “They speak o' new lairds makin' new laws, but here's an auld laird makin' new laws.” “Surely,” said Francie, “there's nae hardship in me seekin' my rent. I am to mak some mair laws, and they that dinna like them can flit.” I heard that he gave Mrs Benson warning to flit because she had made a show of him and his back yard through her window. I cannot say if all this is true, but it is the common talk of the neighbourhood. It is evident, however, that the poor man is out of his senses.’

Here ended Maggie's strange account of my old friend Francie Gibb, and it was enough to make me feel much concern about his state. I had no doubt that poor old Francie was partially insane. So I shortly answered her communication at once, and charged her to write very soon and give me any further information she could learn about him. In the interim I often thought of the poor old man. He had no relations that I knew of, and though he had, it was not to be thought that in his present condition he would tolerate any one's interference. It appeared that he was sane enough to manage his affairs—in an eccentric manner it is true, but then he was always eccentric. He could not on that account be deprived of personal liberty, or of the right of managing his property in his own way, provided he gave no offence or alarm to society. But panics have arisen—both in cities and battle fields—from very inadequate causes apparently, so it would not much surprise me to hear that poor Francie was provided with

lodgings in the asylum, while a curator appointed by law would draw the rents of Gibb's Close. While revolving such thoughts in my mind I had another letter from home, which informed me that a situation was awaiting me there, so I must give my employers warning that I was to leave, or I would lose a good place that was open for me. The letter also informed me that the old laird of the close was still continuing in the same way ; living quite solitary in his den ; never appearing on the street but when compelled by necessity to go out for provisions ; never stopping to talk with any one that accosted him, but returning their salutations in his usual way. The only remarkable difference in his habits was that he had taken to hunting rats in his back premises with terriers and ferrets. The barking of the dogs brought the neighbours to Mrs Benson's window. She, easy woman, little regarded his threat of expulsion, which he seemed to have forgotten, and she only stipulated that the sash should not be drawn up, and that nobody should speak to him. This rat hunting was rather an amusement than an annoyance to the gossips. They were nowise fastidious people that dwelt in Gibb's Close.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

THE PRESERVE.

My thoughts were now much taken up with my approaching departure, and I had no more communications from home. When at length I arrived in the old town, it seemed but a poor wretched dull little place. The streets had dwindled into lanes ; the church and steeple seemed like a gentleman's stable, surmounted by a dove-cot ; and the Provost's new house was like a gate-keeper's lodge that I had seen somewhere. There was little difference on the old folks, but in three short years the youngsters had everywhere grown out of my ken ; my sister Maggie seemed as douse as a nun, and little Katie was grown as big as her mother. They all spoke the queerest broad Scotch. But I soon found out, by their laughter, that I had picked up more of the cockney twang than I was aware of. We had much talk about old friends and acquaintances, but especially of poor old Francio Gibb. It appeared that he had become a confirmed monomaniac. He had taken to rat-hunting in earnest now, as if it was the chief business of his life. People were both amused and surprised by the business-like way he had taken to carry out his strange hallucination. It seems that for some time he had confined his sport to the premises he occupied himself. The mania had grown upon him, how-

ever, until the following extraordinary notion came into his head, and which he had actually put into practice. He announced to his astonished tenants that he meant to assert his right as proprietor to all the wild animals on his property ; that his right was as good on his small bounds as though he had a hundred thousand acres of land ; that he had a right to hunt and kill the said wild animals on his tenants' premises, as well as on the property he himself occupied ; that any one, without his permission, taking by snare, or otherwise trapping or killing said animals, was taking and destroying his property ; that, as he had no hares or pheasants on his property, so he had no occasion to take out a game license—this was in answer to some chaffing about the license ;—that rabbits and rats were both alike classed as vermin, and both were the undoubted property of the owner of the ground where they burrowed ; that the reason why rabbits were esteemed as property, while rats had not been accounted so was that people had a prejudice against them, and would not eat them in this country ; that whether they were good for eating or not, their skins were valuable, and were superior to the finest kidskin for ladies' gloves, and that they were used for that purpose in Paris ; that many of our ladies wore fine ratskin gloves, though they might not be aware of it. Here he showed his amazed audience several specimens of rat leather, which he had tanned and curried himself. With regard to the question of the landlord's right to hunt on the premises occupied by his tenants, he told them that he had always been against that, unless compensation for any damage was agreed upon between the parties ; that he was also against that late enactment which turned policemen into gamekeepers, paid by the country at large ; that he would not call in the police to interfere in this matter. His tenants were weekly and monthly tenants, who were bound by no leases. Nevertheless, he would not hurt or oppress them, or give them any cause to leave their houses. He therefore had a proposal to make, which he thought was very fair on his part. Though not obliged by law, yet to avoid all complaints, he offered to deduct a penny from every shilling of rent, which would amount to a reduction of between seven and eight per cent. to all his tenants, provided they consented to allow him the liberty—and none else—of hunting, capturing, or killing rats on the premises occupied by them, and this at all times, by night or by day. That was his proposal, and he thought it was very fair and liberal. They were not bound to agree to it, however ; neither was he bound to continue them as tenants. If they agreed, their rents would be reduced ; if they did not agree, they must leave their houses. They could take time to consider his proposal, and let him have their answer. Francie then

left the gaping crowd dumfounded and silent. Even gabbit Johnnie Howie had not a word to say. The whole matter was so outrageously odd, so insanely ridiculous, yet laid before them with such gravity and evident good faith, that they were puzzled to decide whether it was all in jest or earnest. But after the laird had left them, and they had looked at one another for a little, the absurdity of the thing had, it seems, struck them all at once, as a peal of laughter that rang through the close testified. 'Aweel,' said Johnnie Howie, as soon as he could speak--for a dozen women's tongues were going by this time all at once--'Aweel, sirs, I think we'll just let the daft body hae his ain way o't till we see how he gets on wi' the huntin'. Od but they speak o' havin' method in madness; by my faith there's method here, and the queerest I ever saw. It will save us a penny or twa a-week, however, and we'll see the sport besides.' 'By my troth, I'll no put up wi't,' cried Mrs Ramsay; 'I'll no hae his dogs and ferrets into my house, to get my bairns bitten by them. I'll leave the house rather.' 'Hoots, woman,' said Mrs Bell, 'wait till ye see the fun. The dogs will be sae ta'en up wi' the rats that ye needna fear them. Ye can keep the bairns out o' their way. I'm mair fleyed at the rats. My house is just swarmin' wi' them. The very wa's are riddled wi' holes like a honeykaim. Tam took to fillin' up their holes wi' lime and stane and broken glass, and I kenna what. It was a' useless. The wa's are biggit wi' clay and round boulders o' stanes, sae for ae hole that he closed up at night, the rats made twa new anes gin mornin'. I couldna get a thing eatable keepit i' my press, sae Tam drave in cleeks i' the kipples. We have a' our meat to hing up ilk a night; and gin we forget onything o' the kind, it's a' eaten up gin morning; and we are sure to forget something now and then. It was nae farre back than last week that I forgot a pound o' fresh butter. It was a' eaten up, a' but a nasty mess in the plate that I had to throw into the midden. The week afore that, I forgot a quarter loaf. In the morning, the inside o't was awa, and nothing left but the crust. Tam said it was unbearable, and that he couldna keep the house at that rate. Low rents! What signifies low rents when fouk are eaten up that way? Od I would be glad to put up wi' the daft creature and his ferrets and dogs gin they would only mak us rid o' the rats.' 'Gude faith, Mrs Bell, I'm o' your mind,' said Willie Black. 'Let him mak's rid o' the vermin, and tak his ain way o't. I'm sure I've carried out fifty bucketfu' o' yird that the brutes scrapit up frae the foond o' the house; they would hae it lyin' like moudeworts' heaps i' the floor i' the mornin's. The back wa' especially maun be undermined by them; and it's my belief that it's dangerous. What else garr'd the

back wa' o' that auld house in Edinburgh sink down and lean outward till the joists and kipples lost their grip o' the wa', and syne, of course, the roof and floors cam down, and buried the poor fouk i' the ruins. It's a good thing our houses are nae mair than twa storeys. If they were high houses, I wad be fleyed for them comin' down about our lugs some night' 'There's nae doubt about the danger,' said Johnnie Howie; 'and a heavy grey slate roof wad smother us if it fell, whether the house were twa storey or sax storey high. Do you no see that the back wa' o' my house is hadden up by twa auld kipples set asklent as praps? —like what the arkiteks ca' fleein' buttresses. They are no very strong praps, and they've sunk twa or three inches down i' the ground sin' I cam to the house. There can be no doubt o' the danger.' 'The Magistrates should condemn the whole o' them, and pu' them a' down.' 'That's a' very true,' cried several voices, 'but whaur wad we get houses?' 'Ay,' replied Johnnie, 'there's the rub. If there were plenty of houses for wark fouk, at reasonable rents, Gibb's Close wad soon be a close to let, and the laird and his rats wad get it a' to themsel's. But if you gae to look for a comfortable house you'll no get it now under sax pound ten. You'll get but a shabby accommodation for five pound. Even a garret in ane o' the new houses will be four pound ten or five pound. Now we're rentit here from a shillin' to auchteneen pence a-week; that's frae twa pound twal to three pound auchteneen; it's far o'er muckle for the holes we bide in. But how can we help ousrels? Some o' us could do better, I allow, but that's nane o' my business. The maist o' us hae but sma' wages, and some o' us havena constant wark. For my ain part, I'm at least three months out o' wark i' the year. Count aff the fourt part, that leaves me about twal shillings a-week. How could I pay three aff that for rent, and keep mysel', the wife, and three bairns, think ye? Then the local taxes rise wi' the rent, so that a man wi' a large family, wha requires a large house, has a pound o' taxes to pay over and aboon the rent. We are tauld that provisions are cheap. Weel, meal and bread are not very high, though they are up high enough. Sugar and tea and some ither things are cheap; but as for beef, butter, eggs, and fish they are beyond the reach o' sma' wages a'thegither. Even the best paid warkman in the town canna afford to buy much o' them, and keep a' things besides in a comfortable way. Fifteen shillings, I am sure, went as far thirty years syne as a pound will go now. So we needna be tauld o' our good wages and cheap provisions.' 'That's true, every word o't,' quoth Mrs Martin; 'but the rich fouk winna hear o't. When I gaed to the appeal court about the poor rates they tauld me that my man made good wages and was well able to pay 't.' 'Curse them a'thegither,'

cried Mrs Mackay, 'they're no worth the speakin' about. Let's hae a join o' tippence a piece. We'll sport the first downcome o' the rent, and drink to our rat huntin' laird and his game preserve in Gibb's Close.' Some declined the proposal, but others agreed to it ; and I believe there were several jorams of whisky consumed on this occasion. No doubt some of them drank more than the first week's downcome of the rents—by anticipation—that night in Gibb's Close.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

RE-UNION.

You may be sure I called upon Francie next day, but he would not admit me. I called out his name—told him his old friend Charlie Gray, just come home from London, had come to see him. Whether he heard me or not I could not say, but he made no response. 'Is that you, Charlie?' queried old Nelly Black, who had just issued from the close ; 'I heard you was come hame. Troth, you're lookin' weel. You'll be to bide at hame, are you, now? But you needna chap at Francie's door, for as far ben as you were afore you gaed awa. He wadna lat in the minister yesterday. Hech, sirs, is n't an unco thing that a sensible man, wha could crack about the maist o' things, and even haud again to the minister himsel', should gang sae far gleyed, and a' about rottens. If you could see him, Charlie, and get him to reason wi' you till you got the rottens out o' his head, he might come a' right again. There's naething the matter wi'm but rottens.' I shook my head, and left the old woman, thinking to myself that it was not easy to minister to a mind diseased—whether haunted by remorse or rottens. A day or two passed, and I had not seen the monomaniac. Several sensible men, including my father, thought that as I was formerly much in his confidence, so I should make another attempt to see him. They urged that if I could get him to converse on the old subjects that we used to talk about, his mind might be brought out of the rut or channel which it now kept running in entirely ; that this was what constituted monomania ; that it was powerful enough in the meantime to absorb and subject all the other faculties of the mind to its influence ; that the most likely way to bring this overmastering idea down from its pre-eminence was to excite all the faculties of the mind to independent action ; and what way so likely as awakening the memory to stimulate the whole. They were of opinion that if such a stimulus could be supplied, and kept up for a

time, the usurping idea would be dethroned, and the mind regain its rational liberty. 'But,' said I, 'if the rut is too deep, if the influence of the dominant idea is too strong, or the subjection of the faculties too complete.' 'Oh, these ifs,' put in my father. 'Weel, laddie, there are nations in that same predicament, or seem to be. It takts a Garibaldi to rouse them from their torpid state ; but you see it can be done in spite o' a' the ifs and butts o' the metaphysicians. Francie's ravelled noddle is not a prostrate nation, and you are not a Garibaldi, sae a' that you haes to do is, do as ye did before, crack as you used to crack, wi' perfect freedom, about onything that occurs, but dinna allude to this daft hobby. He's very jealous o' ony interfering wi' him in that way. When ye hae lulled his jealousy asleep he'll maybe introduce the subject himself, and then ye maun just trust to your ain tact and discretion ; for ony rules laid down, or premeditated plan, wad be useless, and likely to do mair ill than guude.' 'I believe you are right,' said I. 'It is worth a trial, and I'll do my best ; but, mind ye, he's an auld man, was always eccentric, always solitary, and wilful ; however, there's no harm in trying to rouse him up. But how am I to gain admittance ; I was beat yesterday.' 'Tut,' quoth my father, 'he maun gae out on his ain errants sometimes. When you need promptin' in the beginnin' o' your mission there's but little hope o' your success.' 'Well,' I replied, a little piqued, 'I'll find a way, and try to succeed, at all events.' Having recorded the above conversation, it will occasion no surprise to the reader that I met Francie next morning—as it were accidentally—near his own door, with a loaf in his hand. I had hold of his other hand before he recognised me. 'How are you Francie ?' I exclaimed ; 'I'm glad to see you. Do ye no ken your auld friend Charlie ? I'm come hame again, you see, frae the Great Babylon. I was at your door yesterday, but you wasna in.' 'Eh, Charlie, man ; is that really you ? I wadna kenn'd you. You've grown a stout fellow. But I'm failin' fast, man—failin' fast. Changed times wi' me now.' 'Life,' said I, 'is full o' change. Come, let's in and hae a crack for auld lang-syne.' 'Ou aye, ou aye,' said he, in a strange hesitating manner, glancing from side to side, 'come awa.' He opened and went in. I followed ; and quickly he shut and fastened the door inside, muttering, 'I maun keep a' fast now—a' fast ; they winna let me alone.' Here we were saluted with a growling from the interior ; and he had no sooner opened the inner door than several terriers were snarling at my heels. Francie had to seize a strap and beat them back to their several quarters, and with some difficulty, as they were quite wild at the unaccustomed sight of a stranger. 'Sit down, Charlie. The creatures are cankered,

for they see naebody here but mysel'. 'Be quiet, Pepper, ye little satan. I ca' them twa young anes Pepper and Mustard, after Dandie Diumont's terriers, ye ken. Man, if you only saw how they grip the rottens—just ae snap; they need nae mair. But you'll see them. Ay, come down some night—after gloamin', ye ken. You've been lang awa, Charlie.' 'Three years and rather mair,' I said. 'I thought it was langer,' quoth Francie. 'I'm glad you're come. They winna lat me alone now, and they gar the laddies cry after me. I'm sure I dinna meddle wi' them, but they winna let me alone.' 'There shall none meddle wi' you if I can prevent it, old friend,' I replied. 'Thank you, Charlie,' said he, seizing my hand. 'I thought that mony time. You'll no gae awa again, will you?' 'No,' I replied; 'I mean to stay at home now for good and all.' 'That's a man,' cried he, heartily; 'od we'll hae fun yet. A' your auld books are to the fore, Charlie. Quiet, ye devils, Pepper and Mustard; and you too, Gip, ye auld senseless bitch; Charlie and me canna hear oursel's speakin' for you. I'll hae to tie up that auld cankered limmer a' thegither. I see she doesna mind o' you. Od, man, did she no bite Lucky Bell's laddie the ither day. Lucky was to hae me at the Court and get the bitch killed. I haena gaen to her for my rent thae three weeks, for fear she tak me to the Court—it's a' your wite, you auld thief,' he cried, shaking his fist at the cantankerous Gip. 'Man, she's an ill heartit woman that Susy Bell,' he continued in a whisper, 'she said she wad get me put in the asylum, and a strait-jacket on my back; she's an awfu' woman. But you'll no see me ill used now, when you're here, Charlie? Man, I've a paper in Writer Tait's chaumer that'll shaw you what I'm gaun to leave you when I'm awa. See, lad,' he said, opening a chest and bringing out several papers, which I saw were bank cheques, 'naebody but yoursel' gets a sight o' thae. If onything comes o'er me, Charlie, gae you down to Mr Tait, and he'll see that a's right. Mind you have to see to my part now. I lippen to you. I'll tell you mair, but gang you awa now, lad, and come down i' the forenoon, and I'll tell you a' about it.' I left him, not a little astonished at the turn the conversation had taken, and convinced that his mind was unhinged more seriously than I had anticipated. I had never heard him hint before about disposing of his property, and was vexed that I did not ask if he had any distant relations, but resolved to do so at some other opportunity. With the cunning of partially insane persons he had scarcely hinted at his particular mania. It really seemed to me that he was half-ashamed of it—that he had a sort of dim consciousness that it would not bear investigation. I could not otherwise account for his silence on that point, since he was so com-

municative with regard to his testamentary intentions, a subject he never alluded to before. Then, besides his jealousy of an interference in his affairs, which he had always a little of, he exhibited a timidity, and a craving for protection quite foreign to his old fearless independence. I noted when he told me of Mrs Bell's threat of the asylum and strait-jacket, that his lips quivered. It was evident—and it made me sad to see it—that the unhappy man was stricken with that worst of all insanity—that which can identify itself, so to speak. 'I am insane, and I know it,' is the saddest sentence, if true, that the lips of man could utter. Imagine a man awakening in his coffin, and becoming conscious that he was buried alive. The agony of the one would be brief, though terrible; that of the other might be prolonged till Death would become an angel of mercy. Is this dim consciousness of derangement a good or bad sign with regard to the prospect of recovery? I asked myself, but I had not sufficient knowledge of mental disease to answer the question to my satisfaction. Then I thought of Dr Leslie. I would ask his opinion, but I must have further observation, and, meantime, say very little on the matter. Thus cogitating on the state of my old friend, I wended my way home to breakfast, which had little relish that morning.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

THE TURN OF THE TIDE.

I CALLED on my old friend in the forenoon; and on announcing myself through the keyhole was admitted. He was calmer and more collected than in the morning. He took the lead in the conversation, and I followed his bent. He asked questions about English customs; about the way I lived in London; about wages, food, cooking, lodging; then about the Tower, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, and the Monument, and other old buildings and places he had read of, never once alluding to the subjects of our morning talk. Neither did I attempt to recall them to his remembrance. When I rose to leave, he said—'I want you doun at aucht o'clock at night, Charlie, and we'll hae a bottle o' porter thegither. Mind, be sure and come.' I promised, though I had another way to go. That would be three visits in one day; but I was resolved to make my footing good, that my presence might be familiar to him before I attempted to exercise any influence over him. So I went at the time appointed, and found him with a good fire in the ben room, with the table drawn near the hearth, which was

swept, and both were cleaner than ever I had seen them before. There were a couple of bottles, with a tumbler beside each ; a plate of cheese, and another of biscuits ; all which had evidently been prepared with unusual care and attention. I was rather surprised. 'Sit you down, Charlie,' said my host, 'and let's enjoy ourselves. It's long sin' we had a bottle o' porter thegither.' When we had got seated, Francie drew a cork, filled the glasses, and, nodding, said, 'Here's to ye, Charlie—man ye've been lang awa.' I returned the compliment, wishing him health and happiness. 'Ah, man!' replied Francie, 'I'm near done. I'm no able to work now, Charlie. Fouk would force me to mend their shoon. I'm no able to work. I'm obliged to bolt the door to keep them out. What's their business wi' me? I can live on my ain means. I'll keep them out, Charlie, I'll keep them out. What's their business wi' me? I'm independent o' them. I seek naething frae them but my ain. I'll do's I like, and wherefore no? They abuse me because I keep down the rottens they used to complain so awfully about. They are aye crying out again my dogs and ferrets. Man, wad you like to see how Pepper and Mustard, ay, and the auld bitch Gip, snaps them when the ferrets set them out?' 'Never mind them the night,' I said. His countenance fell. I added, 'You are ower minfu' o' your tenants, when they are so thankless.' 'Troth, that's true,' he cried, brightening up. 'I've put mysel' till a deal o' trouble, and gotten abuse instead o' thanks for't. Tak up your tumbler, Charlie, you've no drucken awa, man.' No more allusion was made to rats that evening, but he alluded several times to his papers in Writer Tait's office, hinting that I had some interest in them. 'You'll see when I'm awa, Charlie—ay, when I'm awa—'twill nae be lang. Ding down the auld batteries, Charlie—ding them down—I'm ower auld mysel.' Here he hung down his head, and became silent. I tried all I could, by lively talk of former times, to rouse him out of this melancholy mood. 'It winna do, Charlie, man—it winna do. I'm an auld boot no worth the mendin', the inseams are gane, the water winna bide out. I say, Charlie, gae ye awa hame now, like a gude lad—I'm sleepy the night, I think—and come down the morn.' I rose and took my leave of him, somewhat reluctantly, seeing that he was so low in spirits. On my saying something to that effect, he roused up a little. 'Never mind me, Charlie; never mind me, man, I'm no what I wont to be awa; but I'll be better the morn; come ye down and see. Gude nicht—gude nicht, Charlie—God bless you,' giving my hand a hard grip, he held it a moment—repeating, 'God bless you'—he closed the door, and shot the bolt into its socket.

I never saw him again alive. The poor forlorn creature had gone out in the night and done the desperate deed. He was seen in the morning from Mrs Bennet's window suspended from an iron hook in the wall. I was inexpressibly shocked when I heard of it. I blamed myself for trying to turn the current of his mania, even with the good intention of restoring the balance of his mind; for had not this very good intention been the means of turning him from a harmless manner to melancholy madness? For a long time I could not bear to think of it. To my astonishment—though he hinted something of testamentary remembrance—he left me all his property, heritable and personal. I may not be believed, but the inheritance gave me no pleasure, at least for a while. I never thought of it but I also thought of the poor bewildered soul left alone in the gloom, groping in the dismal darkness of insanity, till it reached the final consummation. When I reflected on his words and manner that night—the last of his life—something whispered me that even then there was a half-formed design, an indefinite purpose, a looking forward to, and a yearning for, the melancholy end.

Tired of life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurled.

But I comforted myself as I repeated again the words of Shakespeare—

‘Who can minister to a mind diseased?’

and was thankful that the pangs of remorse had no share in the affliction of my worthy old friend. Peace to his memory!

Sorrow is not long lived, especially when one gets a good legacy. I have told the tenants that they may have a regular battue among the game in Gibb's Close. I mean to encourage them like a liberal landlord.

THE OLD GATE OF PANMURE.

THERE'S an old iron Gate at Panmure,
And only by age it wears,
As it hath not turned on its hinges
For a hundred and fifty years.

And there by the Gate of Departure,
Where the grass is soft and green,
I look on the old beaten roadway
Through the years that intervene.

The last of the Earls of Panmure
Rides forth with a scanty train,
And the Gate will never be opened
Till he comes to his own again.

He leaves his Castles and Lordships,
All lost for the Stewart line,
To lie in the strangers' chambers,
In the aliens' halls to dine.

He takes his last look of Scotland,
As he sails through the floating foam,
Away to the land of the banished,
Where the heart grows sick for home.

Ah ! the Gate of his long home opened
To him on a foreign shore,
But the old iron Gate of Panmure
Was opened to him no more.

Still it bars the ancient gateway,
And the ground bears no hoof-print
Since the brave old Earl of Panmure
Rode forth to his banishment.

We know there's a Gate of Departure,
That opens to every one,
Alike to the peer and the peasant,
But opens again to none.

O, weary it were for mortals,
When they reached it tired and late,
If God for another journey
Their frames were to renovate.

Dead matter may circle for ever—
It looks not before nor behind,
It never grows weary of travail,
And it bears not a fretful mind.

Through the golden Gate of morning,
See, the Sun comes forth again,
And down through the gloaming gateway,
He traileth his fiery train ;

And ever as Earth revolveth,
He holds his returning way,
And ever to him re-open
The Portals of Night and Day.

But were man to resume life's journey,
With all its trouble and strife,
He would pray for death as surely
As the doomed have prayed for life.

For the Earth would be all a desert,
And under its dismal skies,
The beautiful mirage of Promise
No more would beguile his eyes.

He would look before and behind him,
With many a sigh and groan,
He would be an embodied spectre,
With a heart as heavy as stone.

But good is the Great Life Giver—
Poor man, when his journey's o'er,
Must go by the Gate of Departure,
That opens to him no more.

THE LOG.

I WAS a nursling of untrodden soil ;
In dim primeval forest of the West
I grew, and reared aloft my leafy crest,
 Remote from men's turmoil.

And when the Spring had clad my branches bare,
I waved them in the breeze, all blossom-laden,
And shook my green locks like a gleesome maiden
 Whose light heart flouts at care.

And when, impervious to the Summer heat,
I gave my shade to worlds of fluttering things
That stirred the air, beneath my brooding wings,
 With humming music sweet.

Then in my green recesses caroled free
The merry minstrels of the listening woods,
Wearying sweet echo in their solitudes,
 With warbling melody.

And silvery threads, by fairy fingers drawn,
At eve on my unbending twigs were hung ;
But all unseen, till rich with pearls strung,
 And glittering in the dawn.

When the old forest heard the pealing thunder,
And the rent clouds came rushing down amain,
The hunter listened to the patterning rain
 My leafy covert under.

Sear Autumn came, like Death in fair disguise,
And, as the dying dolphin, changing aye
Her variegated beauty of decay
 With tints of many dyes :

And in her withering breath my branches waved,
 And every twig its leafy honours shed
 In rustling showers, until the ground was clad,
 With wreck of Summer paved.

Cold Winter came ! I was a naked tree,
 Streaked with the whiteness of his hoary hair,
 And wild winds howling through my branches bare,
 Like the loud moaning sea.

And thus return the Seasons, o'er and o'er,
 In endless round, with blossom and decay ;
 But never more to me, or night or day—
 I reckon time no more.

The spoilers came, the ruthless pioneers,
 My giant stem, that bent not to the breeze,
 Fell by the axe : the crash of falling trees,
 Was music to their ears.

They lopped my boughs, and launched me on the
 river :
 With many a lifeless log I floated down,
 Through mangled woods, by many a mushroom
 town,
 Leaving my home for ever.

NOTE.

An uncommon subject may be taken up in a very commonplace way. Chancing to be in the workshop of a young friend who was fond of writing verses, he suggested that we, he and I, should try to string together a few lines on a given subject. I agreed. 'Well, what shall it be?' I inquired. 'There is a log of wood lying on the floor; what say you to that for a subject?' In short, the log was taken up and done for with pens instead of edge-tools. My friend wrote a great many verses on the stick, and I believe burnt them all. Probably my greater vanity only prevented me from following his example. I was afterwards confirmed in my conceit, when another friend told me that he read 'The Log' in 'Howitt's Journal,' in India.

THE LOST MAN.*

LOST ! 'twas in the Gulf of Bacchus,
Sea of storms and wrecks unnumbered,
Where the compass varies ever,
Where the pilots lose their way.

There he boated for his pleasure,
Led the van of each regatta,
Till his fondness for the shallows
Grew, as grows a pampered passion,
To a yearning for the billows,
To a deep-sea-longing grew.

Then the sweet breeze from the meadows
Could not wile him off the waters,
Nor the ties of home retard him,
Nor the chiding din of labour,
Nor the piping call of duty ;
Solemn warning could not stay him,
Keen reproach, nor loud remonstrance,
Nor the heart-sent cry imploring,
Nor the silent tears of anguish,
Nor appealing childish voices,
No, nor whispers of Remorse.

Hug the shore, ye jovial fellows,
Skim the sheltered bays at even,
In the lee of jutting headlands,
Ye are not your brothers' keepers.
Wilfully he drifteth seaward,—
Mounting now on higher billows,
Plunging into deeper hollows,—
Past the bar that's undefined.

* See Note, p. 54.

Mates, look out ! your roving brother,
 As he rides the foamy ridges,
 Waveth you a signal landward.
 Ah ! he lessens in the distance,
 And your eyes are tired of straining.
 Waif of waters, know thy bearings,
 Mates look out for thee no more.

Now the lowland vale of comfort
 Surely from thy sight recedeth ;
 Dim indeed the pleasant villas
 On the upland lawns of Promise,
 And the far hills of Ambition
 Now are hid in clouds for ever—
 Pariah of the Gulf, for ever
 Lost to thee the Promised Land.

Out at sea with flapping canvas,
 Fairly on the Gulf of Bacchus,
 See him now, with helm abandoned,
 Drifting with the winds and currents,
 Swaying on the hills unstable,
 That a moment will upheave him.
 Now the swell, inconstant ever,
 Swiftly glideth from beneath him ;
 Down the rapid slope descending,
 In the trouh o' the sea he welters,
 And the overwhelming surges
 Circumscribe his whole horizon—
 What to him the world beyond ?

When the tidal wave ariseth,
 Nightly on the Gulf of Bacchus,
 Falling stars and flashing meteors
 Flare and hurtle through the darkness—
 Darkness that is *felt* by thousands
 Who have never braved the billows.
 There is one that seaward gazeth,
 Through her tears she sees the only
 Star of the forlorn appearing,
 And with rays of rippling silver

Bridging o'er the troublous waters,
 'Tis but false delusive mirage,
 Yet to her, that weary watcher,
 Seemeth it a pathway, lighted
 Up by Hope, for *him* returning,
 For her own poor castaway.

Wanderer of the wave, remember
 That the hope-light, oft beclouded,
 May be utterly extinguished ;
 That the tension of forbearance
 May at last be strained to breaking ;
 That the love, outraged so often,
 Hath a limit, like the patience
 That pertaineth unto woman :
 If you doubt it, cruise away.

Yet beware, for down to leeward
 Lie the Islands of Temptation ;
 Bearing fruit like Dead Sea apples—
 Rind of beauty, heart of ashes.
 There the Mermaid, wanton Syren,
 Waits and braids her rippling tresses,
 Sings her songs of soft enticement,
 Beckons with her meaning fingers,
 Ever tempts with her allurements
 Reckless rovers of the Gulf.

Ay, beware, her sunny islet
 Is a mound of smouldering lava,
 Thinly crusted o'er the crater
 Of a submarine volcano—
 Such as pave the Gulf of Bacchus—
 Belching forth its hot eruptions,
 Hissing out its deadly gases,
 Charging the submerging waters
 With its fell electric fires.

There are bred unsightly Hydras,
 Hatched indeed by heat Tartarian,
 Deep in cones of sunken Etnas

Coils and broods the monster serpent,
 Fabulous of the broad Atlantic,
 Fabulous of the vast Pacific—
 Native of this Gulf is he.

Where art thou, unhappy cruiser ?
 Art thou utterly bewildered,
 Hopeless, reckless of returning ?
 Is the compass and the rudder
 Lost to thee, and lost for ever ?
 Dost thou dally with the Mermaid ?
 Hast thou seen the snaky monster ?
 Dost thou ever pray for land ?

Art thou sailing under convoy
 Of the Reprobate and Lawless ;
 Riding out the drenching tempest,
 Headless of the wrecks that founder ;
 Reckless of the cozened wretches,
 Lured to reefs by murderous wreckers ;
 Ruthless for the little shallop,
 Still decoyed from sheltered havens,
 Leaving all the quiet waters,
 Where the pastures green are growing ;
 Hasting to the Sea of Danger,
 Crowding to the doomed flotilla,
 That may never see dry land ?

Or, art thou becalmed, and counting
 Lagging moments daily, nightly,
 Counting by the weary beating
 Of th' upbraiding heart, that slowly
 Openeth now its valved sluices
 To empoisoned blood returning,
 That the labouring lungs can never
 Vivify by heavy sighs ?

Or doth fever burn thy temples,
 Feels thy brain the hot oppression
 Till the eyes grow wild and jaundiced,
 Seeing, up and down confounded,

Islands in the clouds suspended,
 Hill with forests branching downwards,
 Phantom craft reversed, whose pendants
 Draggle in the fiery waters
 Of the weird bewildering sea ?

Then the gale is nigh that wafts thee
 Onward to the haunted borders
 Of the central Gulf, that never
 Owned Oceanus, or Neptune—
 But the Pale Horse bears his Rider
 Round the awful circle nightly,
 Though his hoof-beats on the waters
 Are inaudible to mortals,
 Falling silently for ever—
 As the gentle dew that falleth
 On the flowery meads of Summer,
 As the chilly snow that falleth
 On the icy fields of Winter,
 As the briny spray that falleth
 Back into the foaming Ocean—
 Falling as the flying moments
 Fall into Eternity !

Ah ! supine one, blind, besotted,
 Seest thou not in the horizon
 A little cloud, a cloud no bigger
 Than a hand—or fiery writing
 On the vaulted wall of heaven,
 To warn thee of the fate impending ?
 'Twere in vain ; thou couldst not shun it,
 For thou hast no will to flee.

Lost, alas ! the self-abandoned ;
 On the Gulf-stream fairly entered ;
 Bearing down the sloping rapids,
 Down towards the dreadful centre,
 Where wreck-laden tides are meeting,
 Weltering round and round for ever
 In the whirlpool of Silenus.
 Not Charybdis, nor yet Scylla,

Nor our Scottish Correvracken,
 Nor the Maelstrom Gulf of Norway,
 Are to mariners so fatal
 As that dark and deadly vortex
 To the wretches drifted there.

There, within the fatal circle
 Of the whirling hell's attraction,
 Where no earthly power repelleth—
 There he joins the drift-weed gathered
 To the Bacchanal's perdition.
 Now his reeling brain distorteth
 All that meets his sleepless vision :
 Even the empty air is teeming
 With unearthly shapes appalling ;
 And the craven sweat of terror—
 Never tears of grief so racking—
 Raineth on his palsied fingers.
 Now are fiendish promptings deadly
 Growing audible within him.
 Ah ! the tainted soul that shivers
 In her drenched and filthy raiment,
 Longs to rend it, yet abideth,
 Fears to cast her slough behind her,
 Shrinks from utter nakedness.

Who may tell us all the horrors
 That the outer Gulf environs ?
 Who may count the wrecks unnumbered
 Drawn into this dismal Maelstrom ?
 Say how long they yet may circle
 Round it, ever downward tending ;
 Ever with a swifter motion
 Whirling in a lesser orbit,
 Till engulfed into the centre—
 Lost !—Are they not lost indeed ?

Ye that tempt the Gulf of Bacchus,
 Weigh the vantage, weigh the danger,
 While your hands may hold the balance.
 Ye that shun that Sea of Peril,

Fortified against temptation,
Be ye thankful, be ye humble,
Welcome back the late returning,
Look with pity on the LOST.

NOTE.

It is a bold attempt, in our matter-of-fact days, to revive the allegory, which is now obsolete, both in prose and verse. Our forefathers were partial to it, but the old writers came to overload it so much with endless personification of virtues, vices, and all sorts of qualities, and made them discourse so interminably, that at length poor old Allegory got the blame of all the tedium and absurdity. No wonder it fell into disuse !

The minds of men had outgrown the old relish for simple riddles, fables, and allegories, yet as truth could not be all outspoken, allegory, with its inner meaning, was often a defence to the teacher, and did good service in its day ; therefore should by no means be despised. For such purposes it is no longer necessary, but as it could also stir up the comparative faculty, and take a strong hold of the memory, why not now, in its simple integrity ? At all events, I have ventured to use, careful not to abuse it. The rythm, too, is perhaps barbarous ; let me hope, however, that the medium may be tolerated, if it clearly shadows forth ' an ower true tale.'

THE MIDWIFE OF MITHERTON.

GRAND SOIREE AND PRESENTATION TO MRS. MACAUDLE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE GETTING UP.

READER, let me preface with a sort of valedictory address. I am about to forego the proud title of Britisher, and become a citizen of the great Western Republic. But I will not cease to be a Scotchman at heart, though oceans roll between me and the dear old land. I will never learn to look upon Great Britain, the mother of nations, as a dirty little island, peopled with aristocracies and their worshippers. Never shall I forget the warm little nest where I was nursed in the tenderness of childhood. No, if I thought it possible for me to come to such a heartless state of alienation, I would, with all humility, change my destination for Africa, and become naturalised among the Hottentots. But let me cherish the thought that I am a brick of superior clay, and that I may yet do honour to my adopted country, though I have done little to my native land. However, let me hope that I may leave a few friends behind me, for, alack ! I will leave many enemies. The wives of Mitherton, my native village, will long hold me in hateful remembrance. Reader, such remembrance may you never leave behind you, for 'hereby hangs a tale.'

The little town of Mitherton was like a hive on the eve of swarming for some time before the grand soiree and presentation took place. There were colloquies among the women, within doors and without. Wherever two or three matrons met together, there an eager conversation took place, and their household affairs were for the time forgotten. All their confabulations were carried on in undertones, and not a clamorous voice was to be heard. All the men were excluded from these mysterious consultations. When any of the male animals approached one of these groups, the women's tongues were hushed into whispers, or the talk was turned into indifferent channels. Even the children were kept at a distance, lest they should carry off some crumbs from these feasts of confidence. For seven earthly days and nights wives kept the grand secret from their husbands. But by and by light began to dawn upon the

men of Mitherton, and they could see, through the rising mist, that something extraordinary was fermenting in the female mind in which they were not held worthy of participation. How the full enlightenment came about it were hard to say. Perhaps some conscientious creatures began to be troubled with remorse for the anti-connubial sin of keeping a secret from their husbands. Or it might be that some, whose lords were lords indeed, were afraid of the consequences of rebellion, and thought to obtain some lordly indulgence by a show of candour and deference. Perhaps some silly bodies, whose minds were like a sieve full of holes, let through the whole gist of the matter, husks and all. Or it might be that some grown daughters had come round their mothers, and wiled from them the key of the mystery, and then incontinently delivered it over to their sweethearts. By one or other, or all of these means, the mystery became clear, and the men of Mitherton were enlightened to their own amazement.

It appeared that the town could boast of a few strong-minded women, who held as decided opinions on the subject of woman's rights, and maintained them as stoutly, too, as any of their sister Amazons on the other side of the Atlantic. These women of progress held that they had as good a right to give tea and tit-bits, with a present of a bonnet or shawl, to a woman who deserved well of her sex, as the men had to give a supper, with a present of a walking-stick, snuff-box, or watch, to a man who had gained the esteem of his brethren. Having conceived this idea, and feeling that it was incontrovertible, they, like wise women, resolved to make it an accomplished fact. What difficulties they had to encounter I know not, but all were surmounted by the indomitable perseverance of these heroic, strong-minded women. They planned, organized, and canvassed ; they cautioned and controlled, and they supported the timid, all by force of their superior minds. Their committee acted as one man—one woman I should say. Well knowing the opposition they would have to encounter from the exclusive tyranny of man, who would debar woman from all enjoyment but the pleasure to be derived from ministering to his gratification, they wisely resolved to work in secret until their operations were so far advanced that no opposition could prevent the successful issue. Some indication of their *masterly*—*fye* on our partial language—policy may be gathered from the following converaation of girls at the well, which is just under my window :—

‘ Is your mither to be at the soiree, Jean ?’
‘ Surely ; you needna spier. Is your mither gaun, Jess ?’
‘ You may be sure o' that. A' the wives o' the town are gaun, I believe. What think you, Lizzie ?’
‘ I think they are a' gaun daft,’ said Lizzie. ‘ I could see,

twa or three days syne, that my father kenn'd about it, though he said naething till my mother began to speak about it hersel', when he spier'd whaur it was to be. She said they were to get the lassies' schoolroom. "I'll tell you," said my father, "o' a mair fittin' place. There's a big ball in the new lunatic asylum where you should keep your soiree. And ye should a' be in uniform. Ye should a' be in strait jackets, wi' fools' caps on your heads. That's the place for your soiree, and that's the only dress suiting to the occasion."

Here the gypsies joined in a laughing chorus. When they recovered breath, Jean cried,

"What did your mither say to that?"

"Ah," replied Lizzie, "there's the marvel I canna mak out. She just said naething ava', but took it as a joke and laughed. I thought she would have got angry and gein short cut back; but no, she took it a' as meek as a lamb. I canna understand it."

"But I can," cried Jess. "I declare my mither has been takin' a lesson in the same schule. I suppose Jean can tell the same tale."

"They're a' daft thegither!" exclaimed Jean, "a' daft thegither!"

"Ha, ha, ha." Off they went in another fit of laughter.

"Now, lassies," said Jess, "I'll tell you what I think about it. You ken there's a committee o' wives, and you ken wha they are. Strong-minded women, the men ca' them. Now I ken they got some sort o' rules and regulations wrote out; maybe they got some man to help them, and gar'd him swear to keep it secret. At ony rate, they a' put their names to some paper, a' that are to be at the soiree."

"But," said Lizzie, "they wadna surely mak rules to foush how to behave at hame, and yet I can see some sly policy gaun on in mair houses than ane."

"Ay," said Jess, "the strong-mindit anes ken what they are about. They'll no dictate in a barefaced way, so they should be ca'd sly-mindit women, for they will persuade a' the rest to bind themsel's to try no ways but wheedlin' ways wi' their men, and to bear a' their gibes and jeers wi' good humour, till the thing is ower, and the victory complete, and then the cocks will no need to craw ony mair; the hens will craw for them."

"Craw! Ay, they'll craw," said Lizzie, "and I'm sure Jess is richt, for we can a' see it as plain's porridge. I wadna wonder though some o' the sly jades should bring round their men to mak speeches for them, and write them down that they may get them learnt by the time the grand concern comes on."

"O, I wad like to hear them," cried Jean; "some o' them will mak a bonnie mess o't. What do you say about gettin'

round by the back o' the house and hearkenin' at the windows?"

At this time some young men coming up the street broke up the conference. They called out as they passed, 'What about the grand soiree?' 'Girls admitted at half-price.' 'Who's to be chairwoman?' 'Who's the croupiers?' 'Have you got your speech made up?' and such like chaff, till they turned the corner of the street, laughing heartily. Indeed, the men of Mitherton, married and single, after going through the intermediate stages of incredulity and wonder, were very generally seized with an epidemic of laughter.

But if they thought they were to laugh the ladies out of countenance they miscalculated the susceptibility of the feminine mind to masculine ridicule. 'Twas of no use in husbands telling their wives that they were going to make fools of themselves. They were assured in return that there were to be none there but respectable women. There were to be no spies nor reporters admitted. There was to be no intoxicating liquor to excite them to make fools of themselves. The whole affair was to be but a large tea party, strictly private as regarded their proceedings, and as sacred from intrusion as a masons' meeting. And why should they not have liberty to get up a social party as well as the men? They were not to be like Turkish women that dare not show their faces abroad. There was no law in this country to keep them down in that way, and for once they would show to the domineering sex that they were not to be kept like slaves in a free country. There was no answering such unanswerable arguments. Some imprudent benedicts, who threatened to meet them by arguments of force, raised such a storm of vituperation about their ears that they were fain to give up their high standing as an untenable position, for such a pelting shower of opprobrious words, such as tyrant, brute, monster, was hurled at their heads that they had to give in ingloriously. In short, the men of Mitherton had either to allow their wives the rights of belligerents, or withdraw themselves from active opposition, and stand aloof in a sort of sulky neutrality, or, what was better, to pretend to take great interest and pleasure in the prospective demonstration.

The all-important day at length arrived, and nothing unusual disturbed the calm face of nature. The sun set in the west as heretofore, and no portents disastrous ushered in the ever to be remembered night. The girls' school, now elevated into a hall for matrons, was lighted up for the grand occasion. The committee of the strong-minded were in possession. The stewardesses were at their posts. The tables were set. All was ready. The hour was come. Two amazons, one on each side of the door, identified the guests

as they arrived by twos and threes. And now even the bed-rid might hear and know that young Mitherton was awake. The boyish spirit of mischief was lashing himself into excitement. Every fresh arrival called forth uproarious shouts, but when the deputation arrived with Mrs Macaulde, the guest of the evening, the shouting and clamour was kept up loud and long. The presence of maternal relations seemed rather to increase than diminish the glee of the young rogues. But the wise women of the party had, with great prudence, engaged the young men in their favour, a number of whom had formed themselves into a sort of voluntary police to overawe the youngsters. So all went on orderly, though noisily, until the whole party of ladies were assembled, when the doors were shut and barred between the prying outside world and this assemblage of matrons.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE REPORTER'S GALLERY.

How shall I confess my baseness in acting the spy upon this company of ladies, whose privacy should have been held sacred by all honourable men? But my sin has found me out, and I must bear the consequences. There are out-houses at the back of the school-house, from which an easy access can be had to a skylight, which no one had thought of fastening. Behold me, then, equipped for this burglarious business, with small lamp, note-book and pencil. I make my way in the dusk over the fences of the adjoining gardens, which are all deserted, everybody's attention being turned towards the street. I get on the garden wall, from that to the top of the coal-house, thence up the schoolhouse roof to the skylight, which I gently open—no fear of being overheard, as the noise in front is tremendous.—I slip in cautiously, feel for the joists with my feet, for there is no flooring, get down on my hands and knees, creep towards the ventilator in the centre, vulgarly called the sound-hole, light my lamp with a silent match, shade the light with my hat, stretch myself along the joists, get out my note-book and pencil, and am all prepared to make my *début* as a wicked reporter under considerable difficulties. The gas below sends up a flaring glow to the roof above me, and it is not all at once that I can venture to peep down through the hole, lest the roving eyes of some sharp-sighted dame should get a glimpse of my guilty face. At length I make bold to look down and see the tea-table arranged, and the company seated. Mrs Mann, the portly schoolmistress, sits at the head of the table; on her left is seated Mr

Carline, and on her right sits the venerable Mrs Macaulde, the guest of the evening.

Mrs Mann said grace, and the ladies took tea in most exemplary silence. Tea was followed by a service of fruit and sweetmeats, with a glass of some sort of cordial. They showed good taste in ignoring toasts and sipping their glasses of cordial at their pleasure. By and by, after some preliminary whispering, arose that indescribable sound of rustling drapery that told, as plainly as words could tell, that the principal business of the evening was about to commence.

Mrs Mann rose and said—Ladies,—You all know that we are met here to-night to do honour to our good friend, Mrs Macaulde. She has exercised her profession in our town for nearly half-a-century; and during all that long time she has never wearied in attending, with the utmost care and kindness, on all who have sought her services. And not only on the well-to-do, but on the poor also. The poorest of the poor never needed to want her willing services and best endeavours; ay, and other help besides, which I know she would not like me to particularise. When people were poor she never harassed them, but just took what they could afford to give; and in many cases she refused all recompense, where she saw nothing but poverty and privation. She has attended on two generations of women. She was with our mothers when we were born, and she has attended us at the births of our children; and she has been a friend to every one she has waited on during her long professional life. Not only in childbed, but in time of nursing, and at all times, if anything was the matter with us, we could always count upon her readiness to assist us with all her experience, skill, and care; and for all such service she would have no reward. Now, ladies, you all know that I am only speaking the simple truth. Everyone of us here present has experienced such kindness at the hands of our friend, Mrs Macaulde. Now, though such a demonstration as this is not common with our sex, it is common enough among men, and for once we will take a lesson from them. I am sure there never was a man in Mitherton who deserved better of his fellow-men, than our excellent friend here deserves of her sister-women. I have great pleasure, therefore, speaking for us all, in giving our friend and guest a kindly welcome, and in presenting her with this shawl, as a small token of esteem and regard from her friends here assembled. May she live long and have health to wear it; and though she is retiring from professional life, we know she will never weary of doing all the good she can, as long as she is able to go about. Yet we would not wish her to overtask her little remaining strength, but to enjoy the rest she has so well won for an honoured [redacted] ago. (Great applause.)

Mrs Macauld rose and said—Mrs Mann and Ladies,—You'll excuse me, for I'm a hamely auld woman, and canna express my grateful' feelin's ony better than by sayin', I thank you a' frae my heart. It's a pleasant thing for a simple body like me to ken that I hae sae mony friends. It has been a pleasure to me a' my days to mak friends. When I hae pleased ithers, I hae been mair pleased mysel', so I hae aye haen my ain reward. This honour you hae done me was quite unlookit for on my part, because I was sufficiently happy to ken that you a' likit the auld midwife, and wished her weel. But it would be an ill return for a' your kindness were I no happy to meet you, and thankfu' for your braw present. And will I no be proud to wear it for your sakes, and think muckle mair o' your good will and kindness than even the value o' the gift, or the honour you hae done me? Now, my dears, I'm but a poor hand at makin' speeches, but you will tak the will for the deed, and I'll just say—a mither's blessing be wi' you a', for the maist o' you had your first cry in my arms, sae I look upon you a' to be, in ae sense, my ain bairns; nae wonder, then, that I'm proud and happy. (Great applause.)

Mrs Mann said—Ladies,—I am sure you are all delighted with our dear friend's reply, so full of kindly feeling. And now, if you are all agreeable, we will have a song to enliven us. (Applause.) We are much obliged to Mr David Doggerel for composing songs for our soiree. May I call upon our friend Mrs Skirlin for one of David's songs.

Mrs Skirlin sang—

THE DIRT GAES AFORE THE BESOM.

Our auld gudeman cam' hame,
And vow but he was surly,
He had heard o' our grand soiree,
And wad raise a hurly burly.
'What's this you're about, gudewife,'
He began wi' his despotism;
'I'm sweepin' the house,' quo' I,
'The dirt gaes afore the besom,
Gudeman,
The dirt gaes afore the besom.'

Our auld gudeman gaed out,
Awa' gaed he in a huffy;
He cooled himself i' the yard,
And was back again in a jiffy;
He set himself down in his chair,
And I gaed him his tea to please 'im,
But I hum'd laigh in to mysel',
The dirt gaes afore the besom,
Gudeman,
The dirt gaes afore the besom.

(Laughter and applause.)

Mrs Mann said—David Doggerel was much indebted to Mrs Skirlin for setting off his ridiculous song to the best advantage. There was another, a sort of parody. David was fond of parodies, for they saved him the trouble of straining after originality, which was a scarce commodity with him. I would ask Mrs Carline to favour us with the song.

Mrs Carline sang—

THERE'S NAE LUCK ABOUT THE HOUSE.

There's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck ava;
There's little rule about the house,
When our gudewife's awa.

The lads and lasses dance and sing,
The bairns are at mischief,
The dogs are barkin' through the house,
The cat has come to grief;
The hens are on the dresser head,
The plates are knockit down—
There's naething right about the house,
Nor yet about the toon.
There's nae luck, &c.

When our gudewife's about the house
Her tongue gaez like a bell;
We daurna speak aboon our breath,
Nor our gudeman himsel'.
She drives the fallows to their wark,
She gars the hizzies steer—
The very dogs about the toon,
They daurna bark for fear.

There's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck ava;
There's little rule about the house,
When our gudewife's awa.

(Laughter and applause.)

Mrs Sage rose and said—Mrs Mann and Ladies,—Allow me to say that our friend, David Doggerel, though he may net be a great poet, yet he may be a great wag. Does he think, because we insist on our rights as women, that we wish to domineer over the men? Naething o' the kind. We would hae the man to keep his place, and the wife to keep hers. Nae doubt there are some domineerin' women, but there are mony mair domineerin' men. David should hae gien us a specimen o' baith. He likes to jibe about the grey mare being the better horse. It may be he has some experience in the matter. Mrs Doggerel is here among us, and could tell us how the case stands atween her and David; but we want nae tales out e' the house. When a man and woman enters into a compact for life, mutual privacy is a sacred duty, and far be it from us to weaken the obligation.

I would now propose to change the subject, and hae a love sang to mind us o' our courtin' days. There's a sang, made by a lad you a' ken, about a lassie that attended this school. He's a married man now, and his wife is here present, but she needna think shame o' her gu'deman or his sang either. If Mrs Mann would call upon Mrs Young, she would favour us with the song. She ken's what I mean.

Mrs Young's song—

LOVE'S TRANSFORMATION.

Before I met my lassie dear,
O sic a clown was I,
Nae charm for me upon the earth,
Nae beauty in the sky ;
The sun but set me to my wark,
The moon but set me free ;
To wake by day, and sleep by night,
Was a' the life for me.

But when I met my lassie dear
The wairld to me was new,
Sae gowden grew the gloamin' sky,
The distant hills see blue ;
The moon aboon, the earth beneath,
O, they were fair to see !
When creepin' shadows keepit time,
The trystain' time to me !

But a' wad change, my lassie dear,
The wairld wad soon grow auld,
If our joint hearts, that made it young,
Should grow estranged and cauld.
Come, sacred Truth ! and perfect Faith !
Our guardian Angels be ;
O wha wad live when love was dead,
And hae twa deaths to dee ?

(Great applause.) After it ceased there was a hush among the ladies for a time. They were carried back in fancy to sweet seventeen. But the pleasing retrospect was presently broken up by

Mrs Mann, who said—I am aware it is scarcely right and proper to ask our honoured guest to entertain the company, but I hope she will excuse me for asking her for a bit of a song, as we may never all have an opportunity to hear her again. I am aware, too, that she is not so able as she has been, but we will hear her though she sing quite low. There is a song of her grandson's, which I am sure you would all be happy to hear. I would ask her to be so good as favour us with 'Ailie Swankie.'

Mrs Macauld said—Ladies,—Your hear what my friend, Mrs Mann, has asked me to do, and you a' ken I'm no very fit for 't. However, it may weel become me to do my best to please you. I'm sure you'll mak every allowance for the auld wife ; sae I'll try and gie you Jamie Macauld's sang, but weel I wat, it's a daft-like thing.

AILIE SWANKIE.

Anchimithie braes are bonnie,
 Where lie the mussel shells,
 Where bonnie Ailie Swankie,
 My father lassie dwells,—
 My father lassie dwells,
 A red rose by the sea,
 And for bonnie Ailie Swankie
 I could lay me down and dee.

Her face is weeo bonnie,
 Her heart is true and leal ;
 She's fairer far than any
 That ever bore a creel,—
 That ever bore a creel,
 And she's a' the waird to me,
 And for bonnie Ailie Swankie
 I could lay me down and dee.

Her feet, they are the lightest
 That e'er wore leather shoen,
 Her ankles are the rarest
 That e'er the sun shone on—
 That e'er the sun shone on,
 Or ever the moon did see,
 And for bonnie Ailie Swankie
 I could lay me down and dee.

(Great applause.) Now, leddies, said Mrs Macauld, I may tell you that I ance saw Ailie Swankie, when I was a lassie. I was auld enough to hae some curioaty to see a woman that had been famed for her beauty in town and country, and wha was ken'd by the name o' bonnie Ailie mony a year afore I was born. She was an auld woman when I saw her, but the comeliest auld woman I ever saw. In spite o' hard wark, and even auld age, she still keepit some remains o' her former beauty. Her hair was white, but her een were still bright and clear, and her cheeks like roses. It maun be nearly a hundred and fifty years since she was born, and weel on to three score since she died, and yet the remembrance o' her beauty is kept up to this day. So dinna think lightly o' beauty, my dears ; it's no the highest gift o' the Maker to the creature, but it waana gien to woman without a wise purpose. The rose and the lily are bonnie flowers, but a comely woman is a mair pleasant sight to man than a' the flowers that grow. But there's a beauty mair precious than that which is only skin deep—the beauty o' a pure and lovin' heart, shinin' out through a pleasant countenance. That's the sweet fragrance o' the living rose, and it winna fade wi' the bloom o' youth, but bides sweet and bonnie till a green auld age. Blessed is the woman sae richly gifted, happy is the man wha gets her for a wife, and happy are the bairns wha hae her for a mither, though nae poet may mak sangs about her beauty. But I'm takin' up your attention o'er lang. (Cries of 'No, no.') Weel, you'll allow me to tak a breath after I ask our friend Mrs Mann to lay aside her dignity as Chairwoman for a

wee, and favour us wi' a sang. (Applause.) Now, my friends, there are thochtless men wha wad laugh at what I was sayin' o' a leal, true lovin' woman, and deny that our sex possess such gude qualities. I wad just bid such men —wha forget that women were their mithers—think o' such a woman as Florence Nightingale, and say if it wasna for something better than mere personal beauty that her name is a name o' honour and reverence in every land, and a crown o' glory to womankind. (Applause.) Mrs Mann can gie us a sang about Miss Nightingale that we'll a' be delightit to hear.

Mrs Mann said—I'm fairly in for it, and must do the best I can.

THE NIGHTINGALE OF ENGLAND.

The Nightingale of England flew
 To cheer the wounded all forlorn;
 She heard, as lulled the storm of war,
 A moaning o'er the waters borne.
 O then she flew on wings of love,
 Left sess between her and her nest
 To lighten such a load of pain,
 And soothe the parting souls to rest.

'O, have you seen that bird of love,
 And have you heard her voice so sweet?
 'We saw her in yon dreary place
 Where laurels with the cypress meet;
 She came to soothe the woes of war,
 The broken waves of life to calm;
 We heard her voice, to weary hearts
 More precious than the healing balm.'

'How knew you England's bird of love,
 When first she sought you alien skies?
 'O, need was none for tongue to tell,
 So true the grateful heart's surmise.
 Had Howard c: me to life again,
 Who many a year hath slumbered there,
 He would have known his kindred bird,
 Though he had met her unaware.'

Now she returns on drooping wings,
 To nestle in her native land,
 That well may prize her peerless bird,
 The chief of Mercy's honoured band.
 The Nightingale that flew afar,
 To cheer the wounded all forlorn,
 Will be old England's bird of love,
 Will be the theme of bards unborn.

(Great applause.) Then silence settled down, even on this assembly of ladies, for a time; and during that time, at least, every one was a philanthropist.

Mrs Mann then rose and said—Ladies,—You will now have the pleasure of hearing a loyal song sent us for this occasion. There is an old proverb that tells us to give a certain potentate his due. It is good advice, though rudely given, and it is no doubt rudely introduced here; but are

there not folks so churlish that they will not give due commendation, or even bare justice, to a good woman and a good queen? (Applause.) To such churls I would say, Search the history of your country and see if you can find a better sovereign, or one so good as Queen Victoria. (Applause.) She has never hindered improvement, but has always been ready to give effect to the will of the nation. What more would these grumbler have? A President, as the folks have in the United States? Well, let them wait till the great majority become Republicans, and then that happy consummation may be attained. Meanwhile, we may all be thankful for the outcome of the long struggles of ages that our history records. And yet the grumbler ask if our freedom has been achieved. Truly, they prove abundantly by their speeches that there is no want of freedom for that unruly member, the tongue. A woman's tongue is nothing to that of a politician who has but one idea, and gives it full vent. (Applause.) They tell us that a Republican Government would relieve us of a load of taxes. We have a little Municipal Republic, under the Crown, here in the town of Mitherton. We have our members of Council, or Congress, elected by our townsmen. The Council elects our Provost, or President. Does this freely elected local Government fail to tax us? We hear a great deal about the cost of royalty. I believe it amounts to about eightpence or ninepence a-head yearly; an awful amount, truly, to thirsty patriots, who drink twice or thrice as much weekly while discussing the grievance. (Applause.) I am taxed twenty or thirty times as much for this poor schoolhouse by the President and Congress of Mitherton. (Great applause.) And nearly all that heavy tax has been laid on since we got what is called municipal freedom. Choose or change our rulers as we may, aye the other penny goes on the pound. We say charity should begin at home, surely so should patriotism. Let our Republican friends bestir themselves to keep down our local taxes, while they are waiting for their grand Republic, and so they will serve their apprenticeship as citizens. (Applause.) It seems that civilisation and public debt, and high taxation, go all together. Every town in the country must have its debt as well as the nation, and no wonder though individuals follow such a bad example. Now, does anybody out o' bedlam imagine that the Queen has anything to do with all that? (Applause.) O, but some say, she is so rich that she could keep a' the royal family independent o' the nation. Well, she shows a good example, at all events, by keeping out o' debt. Would they rather see, as has been seen, a prince's carriage arrested on the streets of London, and Parliament called on to pay the debts of the owner, over and above his income? There are surely few faults to be

found in a sovereign when the greatest is, that she lives within her income and saves money. But they cry out against princes livin' in luxury and idleness at the public expense. Well, the luxury might be curtailed nae doubt; as for idleness, the jealousy o' the nation is a great bar to keep them out o' office, and it seems queer to bar fousk out, and then blame them for no comin' in. Still they insist that at all events the Queen should provide dowries for her daughters. Most likely, by virtue o' the contract between the nation and the House o' Brunswick, she considers herself in nowise bound to do so. The length and breadth o' the matter seems to be this—We invited that house to rule over us; when we withdraw our allegiance from it, we are bound to leave it in as good a position as we found it. Unless we are prepared to repudiate all our national engagements—which course even Brother Jonathan would not sanction,—we must keep our royal family in accordance with the dignity of the nation, otherwise we must allow the honour of Great Britain to become a byword among the nations. Ladies, I need not apologise for touching on political matters in this way, for our sovereign is a woman like ourselves, and we are all proud of her. At the same time, she is an example to rulers, to the wives and daughters of the high and wealthy, and to every woman in her dominions. We cannot well imitate gentlemen in loyal toasts, but we can hear with pleasure a loyal song. One has been sent us by a friend for this occasion. It seems to have been intended for two voices, but our friend Mrs Scott will manage to sing it in solo. I have great pleasure in calling upon Mrs Scott for the song.

Mrs Scott sings—

O, WHO WOULD BE A QUEEN?

'O, who would be a Queen,
And have a crown of care,
With all the cumber of the State
That she is bound to bear?
So lofty is the height
Where she must sit alone;
There's but the cope of heaven above
Her station in a throne.
O, who would be a Queen?"

'Who would not be a Queen
With all her care, to be
The mildest ruler on the earth
That treason lives to see?
With honours meekly borne,
And blessings humbly won,
With sympathy and love between
The people and the throne.
Who would not be a Queen?"

'O, who would be a Queen,
To be in palace pent,

Beest by men's unsparing eyes,
 On rude espiail bent?
 Whose home is all abroad,
 Whose state is not her own;
 There's freedom in the life beneath,
 But little in thone.
 O, who would be a Queen?"

'Who would not be a Queen,
 To influence the age,
 And in the annals of the isles
 To fill the fairest page;
 And shew to womankind
 The worth of duty done,
 At once the beauty of a life
 And glory of a thone.
 Who would not be a Queen?"

(Great cheering, and waving of handkerchiefs. Loud hurrahs from young Mitherton without.)

Mrs Young then said—Ladies,—Let us now have something lively, if you please. Some poet says,—

'A little nonsense now and then
 Is relished by the wisest men.'

and why should it not be relished by us foolish women? I would then propose that Mrs Mann should call again on our friend Mrs Carline, who, I think, has something yet to give us from Mr David Doggerel. If he has been a little satirical on the sex, he has made amends in some of his last sangs, and it's as good for him. David doeana want sense,—he kens it's no canny to mak enemies o' the women.

Mrs Carline sings—

WOMANKIND.

If it wereena for womankind, what wad we do?
 We wad eat raw meat, we wad sup cauld broo,
 We wad wear dirty duds, and gang raggit too,
 If the women were out o' the wairld.

If it wereena for womankind, where would we gang
 When the night sets in sae dreary and lang?
 There would soon be an end o' our crack and our sang,
 If the women were out o' the wairld.

If it wereena for womankind, how wad we fare
 When our health was gane, and our sickness sair?
 We would soon ken the worth o' their tender care,
 If the women were out o' the wairld.

If it wereena for womankind, what wad we be?
 We wad haes nae name fu' o' youthfu' glee;
 The race wad gae dune, we might lie down and dee,
 If the women were out o' the wairld.

(Great applause.)

Mrs Mann said—I think our Laureate has, like his betters, been giving directions about the order in which his songs should be sung, reserving the favourite lilt to the last.

Well, I suppose we may go on with the dessert. There is a tit-bit in which the poor bachelor gets a slap, and I think Mrs Doggerel will favour us with her gudeman's song.

Mrs Doggerel sings—

MISTRESS MACAUDLE.

May the sorrow and dule
Tak the bacheler fule—
A' the best o' his days he will dawdle,
And synce he'll grow auld,
In a garret see cauld,
And never ken Mistress Macaulde.

Now the usefu' gudeman,
When the hour is at han',
Cries 'ride without bridle or saddle.'
Jock wallope the yaud,
And gallope like mad
To call upon Mistress Macaulde.

But he leads a dull life
Wi' a canty young wife
Wha needs nae sic thing as a cradle;
Though she were a saint,
She'll no be content
Till he call upon Mistress Macaulde.'

(Laughter and applause.)

CHAPTER THIRD:

MRS. MACPHUN PUTS HER FOOT IN IT, AND SO DO I.

'I THINK, Ladies,' said Mrs Macphun, 'that's the ~~most~~ sensible sang that's been sung the night. I would hae a heavy tax laid on a' the bachelors. I wad hae a law made that nae but married foush should be allowed to leave the country for America, or ony ither place. I wad allow nae single men to gae awa, as lang's there's sae mony single women here that canna get a livin'. See the men gettin' a' the best-paid wark; and, except at the mills, there's very little a woman can get to do that she can mak a livin' at. I verily believe that mony poor elderly women get nae mair to eat than twa or three tatties and a thin slice o' bread, wi' a drap o' thin tea water, frae day to day; and whiles I doubt if they get even that. I wadna hae women starvin' that way as lang as there's unmarried men in the country. It's their duty to tak wives and bring up families. What else were they sent into the wORLD for? When every woman has a vote for a member o' Parliament, see if we dinna get laws made to gar the men do their duty. (Cries of 'Nonsense, nonsense,' 'You're gaen ower far.') No, it's

nae nonsense; I'm nae gaun a bit ower far. I'm only speakin' my mind—and what for no? It's easy for some o' you to cry 'Nonsense,' but wait till you hae, like me, half-a-dozen grown-up dochters hingin' on your hands—(laughter)—and you'll tak anither view o' the matter. If the men winna support the women, let them open up their trades to them, that they may keep themsel's. I see naething to hinder them frae being tailors, shoemakers, printers, and even doctors. (Laughter.) When women can mak half-a-crown or three shillings a-day at trades, the men may gae to America as fast as they like. Nae doubt it's natural that a woman should like to hae a gudeman, and a hame, and a family o' her ain, but some that have a' that hae driven their hogs to a poor market. I wad hae laws to punish the drunken brutes that spend their wages in the public-house, and starve their wives and families. I wad hae a law made to hae a public workhouse to keep them in, at hard labour, and to hae their wages sent to their wives. And what for no? (Some hissing.) What are you hissing at? Is there no muckle need o' something o' the kind? Nae farrer gane than last week I gaed to see a wife that the maist o' ye ken. She was sittin', poor thing, wi' twa bairns hingin' on her claes, and the youngest on her knee, no a month auld. The aulder anes were greetin' for a piece, and the youngest for the breist. There was nae bread to gi'e them, and but little nourishment had the mither for the infant, and— (Cries of 'Nane o' that here'—'Put her out'—'Out wi' her'—'Out, out, out.') I winna be put out. Have I no paid my way? You are just takin' the part o' that woman's drucken man, and turnin' against your own sex. (Cries of 'Nae scandal here'—'Haud your lang tongue'—~~nae~~ Nae vulgarity here'—'Out wi' her'—'Out, out, out'—great excitement—'Order, order, order'—'Order, order, order,' from the chair—every one on their feet, every one's tongue going—confusion of Babel.)

It may be believed that by this time I was tired enough of my uneasy position. While trying to shift my posture, unheard amid the hubub, and tickled with laughter, my foot slipped off the joist with a vengeance, and went down, crash through lath and plaster, showering the debris on the agitated ladies below. And now there arose a screaming like the clamour of ten thousand gulls at the Red Head. I made hasty efforts to pull up my leg that was dangling beneath the ceiling, and at length tore it up in desperation, at the expense of trousers and skin, leaving my shoe behind, which went down to be a witness against me. My lamp was upset, but I saw the skylight, and crept towards it,

drew myself up, and got on the roof, then down—I don't know how—and measured my length in the adjoining garden, with my note-book grasped in my hand. I got home in the dark unperceived, but how I passed that eventful night I leave you, sympathizing reader, to imagine. I have expanded my notes, as you see them, but have 'set down naught in malice.' They may as well be published as not; it will add nothing to the enormity of my offence. I am known all over the town as the hateful spy, for my lost shoe was identified by the cobbler who patched it lately. May his awl be thrust through his babbling tongue! Indignant wives are pointing to my window, girls are giggling on the pavement, and lads laugh loudly as they pass. The town of Mitherton has become too hot to hold me. I must be off, and that under cloud of night, but my luggage will be light, and I can be my own porter. I hope to be across the Atlantic before my report of the grand soiree appears in print, but if any friend would send me the paper, I would most likely get it, if addressed to the care of my respectable relative, Hugh K. Walker, 999 Nickerbocker Street, New York.

WILLIE WYNE.

GAE bring to me my green-wood guise,
And bring my buckskin shoon,
And I'll awa' to my true luve,
By the wan licht o' the mune.
' Now busk ye, Marie, busk ye, luve—
Gin luve o' mine ye be—
And we'll awa' to Lochtoun Tryst,
By the loans o' Netherlea.'

' I wad be fain to gae wi' you,
Oh, Willie ! weel ye ken,
But wha wad say to me, the morn,
Ye're welcome hame again ?
Oh ! wha wad say a silken snood
Was meet for me to wear,
Gin it was tauld my Willie Wyne
Was Wyne o' Wynetoun's heir ?

' There's nane will ken, there nane will trow,
Sae busk ye, gin ye may ;
I'll see my true luve hame again
Before the dawn o' day :
Now ilka maiden meets her joe,
The mune is shinin' clear,
And ilka bird is wi' its mate—
What hath my luve to fear ?

' I fear the scaith, I fear the scorn,
That simple maid may dree,
Wha gies her wealth o' luve to ane
Aboon her ain degree :
I fear the kisses o' your lips,
The glances o' your een ;
I fear the heart that's in my breist,—
Luve, rede ye what I mean ?'

‘ I rede, ye mean that cauld munesheen
 Wad melt the wreaths o’ snaw,
 Before that luve wad warm your breist,
 Your frozen heart to thaw.
 I’ve tasted o’ the dear delyte,
 And I maun dree the pain :
 Ye gave to me your faith and troth,
 To tak’ them back again.’

‘ Oh, Willie, Willie ! weel ye ken
 Ye cam’ a guiser loon ;
 Ye tauld me ye was ranger lad
 In the bonnie woods o’ Scoone.
 I gave my hand, I gave my heart—
 And what could maiden mair ?—
 I gave them to my ranger lad,
 But no to Wynetoun’s heir.’

‘ Now list ye, Marie, list ye, luve,
 Gin ye be leal and true,
 I surely may be Wynetoun’s heir,
 And Willie Wyne to you ;
 And ye sall hae a pleasant bower,
 And wear the silk sae fine ;
 Ye’ll be the licht o’ life to me,
 The ae true luve o’ mine.’

‘ Fause luve, my father’s locks are grey,
 My mither’s cheeks are pale ;
 Gin I wad leave them shame and wae,
 Oh ! could I hope for weal ?
 My heart wad beat in sair unrest
 Beneath the silk attire,
 As captive bird, in lady’s bower,
 That beats the gilded wire.’

‘ Ye needna fear, my bonnie lass,
 I’ll tak ye ower the sea ;
 And ye sall drink the ruddy wine
 In France and Germanie ;

Whenauld Sir Hugh is dead and gane,
We'll soon come hame again,
And syne ye'll be my lady-luve,
Wi' servin' maids and men.'

'I wadna be your paramour,
Though ye might wear the crown ;
I wadna hing my head wi' shame
At e'en when we lay down ;
I wadna loathe the licht o' day,
And flee my kith and kin,
For a' the gowd the wairld could gi'e
To gild the shame and sin.'

'Now Gude forfend I tempt ye mair,
Richt noble luve o' mine ;
My auld gudeisure is dead and gane ;
The lands are mine and thine :
Now I'm the lord o' Wynetoun towers,
Ye'll be my ladye fair ;
And ye'll gi'e me a brave young son,
And he'll be Wynetoun's heir.'

THE LUCKY MAN.

CHAPTER FIRST.

'THERE'S nae luck about the house' nor anywhere else now-a-days. Auld Luck departed this world with the spinning-wheel, which obsolete machine even royal patronage, alack ! will fail to restore us, Old Dame Fortune is still alive, however, and, strange to say, seems to be renewing her age. Though now—I beg her pardon—well stricken in years, she can read without spectacles the hearts of her votaries, and knows full well if they devote their whole energies to her, and her only. She has now abandoned that indiscriminating haphazard way of distributing her favours, of which her disappointed followers have so often complained ; and as she has recovered her sight—that is to say if she had ever lost it—she borrows the scales of her blinking friend Mrs Justice, and weighs out to all impartially their meed according to their deservings. 'Every one should be the architect of his own fortune' is the axiom of the age. Don't give him a lift, as that would only hamper him. Common sense told us long before phrenology was heard of that every mason could not be a Christopher Wren ; but the Peter Farleys of our day point to St Paul's Cathedral, and say to every one that wields the trowel, go thou and do likewise, or be a barrowman all your days, and don't blame Fortune.

I remember reading a good while ago, in a popular journal, an article in which the writer meant to inculcate the doctrine that merit necessarily commands success, and of course the inevitable deduction that success is the criterion of merit. He tells his readers that when a boy he was skating on a loch ; that the ice gave way, and he was precipitated into the water ; and that while his gentle schoolfellows were impotently yelping at safe distance, a poor boy, whom he and they had incessantly persecuted, came running to the rescue, and without a moment's hesitation, forgetting all former unkindness, leapt into the water and saved the life of his persecutor at the risk of his own. The writer goes on to say that he had lost all trace of his benefactor, and expresses his regret that he never had an opportunity of proving his grateful remembrance by affording him substantial assistance in after life, but consoles himself by the reflection that a youth of such a noble nature must have

long ago secured to himself a respectable position in society. *Ergo*, every man who fails to raise himself above manual labour is a mean-spirited fellow—of a base nature, possessing no noble qualities.

This cheering doctrine is daily dinned into our ears more or less plainly ; and nothing can be clearer than this conclusion, that when such teaching takes effect and transforms us all into men of noble nature, there will be no poor fellows left mean enough to rake our gutters and empty our ash-pits. But as most rules are allowed to have exceptions, perhaps there may be some in this case. Our old proverbs appear to contradict one another sometimes ; but the discrepancy will disappear when we consider that one may stand for the rule and another for the exception. There is one—I think of the latter sort—that says, ‘An inch o’ guid luck’s worth an ell o’ forecast.’ This should have been the motto for Sandy Scott’s escutcheon ; at all events, in his time he went under the cognomen of ‘The Lucky Man.’

Deacon Scott was a small manufacturer in the town of Plodwell. He prepared his own yarn, warped his own webs, and with such a modicum of trade brought up a numerous family, as did many in those days, and gave them, the boys at least, rather a superior education. Sandy was the youngest of the family but one, and if he had not so much schooling as his elder brother it was his own fault. Robert, the eldest, after serving his term of apprenticeship in a merchant’s counting-room, got, through his master’s influence, a situation in a mercantile house in London. He afterwards was sent out to India by his employers with, I believe, some share in the business. There were twenty years between the ages of these two brothers—all the rest were girls—and thirty between the first and last of the family. I well remember the birth of Esther Scott, for it was the talk of all Plodwell. Her mother was said to be over fifty years of age at the time, and had rested ten years from her maternal labours, when, to the astonishment of the gossips far and near, she presented the deacon with another baby—the last of the Scotts. The deacon accepted the congratulations of the jokers with great glee, remarking, that if it had been a laddie, he would have called it Benjamin.

Sandy was a clever boy, but for carelessness and mischief he was notorious. He was an incorrigible truant ; the taws made no impression on him, so that at last the teacher—anxious to remove such a bad example from the academic grove—cellar I mean—candidly told his father that he was doing no good at school.

‘Well,’ said the deacon, ‘I’ll set the young rascal to work, and we’ll see if that will tame him.’

So Sandy was put to the loom. For some time all went

well with the young wabster ; the reckless, idle schoolboy seemed suddenly transformed into a *douce*, steady, industrious lad — the, ne'er-do-well was become a pattern to all the 'prentice loons in Plodwell. Folks were somewhat dubious about this wonderful amendment, though they might say little about it.

On a neighbour congratulating the old man one day on his son's exemplary conduct—

‘ Ha, ha ! ’ quoth the deacon ; ‘ brag o’ the winter on the rood day. The young weavers are marvels o’ industry for the first month or so ; but wait a wee—if it continue lang I’ll be agreeably deceived.’

The old man was not deceived, for before long the monotonous whiz of the shuttle became horrible discord in the ears of Saunders ; and then he might be seen anywhere but on his loom.

It chanced about this time that a well-known packman set up his ellwand of rest in the town of Plodwell. He took a shop, got a big window in’t—big for those days—and made a grand display of woollen drapery therein, and had a gilded sheep stuck up above the door ; the like was never seen in the town before. It was quite impossible for the women folks to pass Andrew Bell’s grand shop without stopping to look in at the big window ; and as for the boys, they seemed to form a body-guard at the door. As the ex-packman—now shopkeeper—was arranging his goods, his eye chanced to light on our friend Sandy, who was conspicuous among his attendants in the doorway.

‘ Here, youngster, lead me a hand, as you seem to have nothing else to do.’

A dozen volunteers proffered their services at once, but Sandy only was accepted.

‘ You seem to be a smart chap,’ said Mr Bell. ‘ What’s your name ? ’

‘ Sandy Scott,’ replied our wabster.

‘ Are you a son of Deacon Scott’s ? ’

‘ Yes,’ quoth Sandy.

‘ Oh, I know your father. Are you not at the School ? ’

‘ No ; my father took me from the school and put me to the loom.’

‘ Indeed ; but why are you not at your work this forenoon ? ’

‘ I dinna like it,’ he replied demurely.

‘ I don’t wonder at it, Sandy ; it is rather a wearifu’ job, but you should keep at it till you get a better.’

‘ If I was to keep at it I wad never get awa’ frae it.’

‘ You’re an auld-fashioned loon,’ said the shopkeeper, laughing. ‘ Wad you like to be a merchant ? ’

‘ Wad I not ? ’ exclaimed our friend, delighted with the idea.

‘Well,’ said Mr Bell, ‘I’ll speak to your father about the matter ; with a little brushing up I think you may do. I want a boy, but one that will not leave his work—mind me.’

‘Nae fear o’ that,’ exclaimed Sandy ; ‘I’m sae glad to get quit o’ the loom.’

‘No doubt,’ said Mr Bell ; ‘but, by the way, what sort of scholar are you ?’

‘I’ve been through book-keeping, double and single-entry,’ he exclaimed triumphantly.

‘Did you go through double-entry first ?’

‘Na, sir, you’re surely joking now,’ said Sandy, slyly.

‘Well,’ said his friend, ‘we’ll see.’

The embryo merchant appeared at dinner time with a look of immense importance, and calling his mother aside, told her that he was in a fair way to become a gentleman, and that nothing was wanting but the paternal consent, and she must give his father no peace till he agreed to let him go to Mr Bell, and learn to be a merchant. The rogue knew what he was about ; if he had his father’s consent—which he knew could be best obtained through his mother’s influence—he counted on her’s as a matter of course.

‘Weel,’ said the deacon—when the draper called and spoke to him on the matter—‘in troth I’m at a loss what to do with that laddie ; he was doin’ little good at the school, and he is doin’ as little at wark. I had some thoughts of sending him back to school, now when he has got tired of weaving, but I fear—’

‘O, he wouldn’t like to go back now,’ said the draper. ‘I’ll tell you how we’ll do. If Mr Whackem would give him a lesson of an evening I wotild let him away in time.

‘Very good of you,’ said the deacon, ‘and I daresay after all it’s the best plan. I am sure the dominie will put himself to that trouble to oblige me ; and Sandy must be made sensible that attention to the evening lessons is an indispensable condition of the engagement.’

He was called into the room, and gladly agreed to the aforesaid condition ; so it was settled. Sandy was no longer a weaver.

A great change came over the lad. He attended at the schoolmaster’s regularly in the evenings, and was as remarkable for attention as he was formerly the reverse. The good man was somewhat prejudiced against him at first, but his coldness soon melted before the new-born ardour of his pupil, so he took pleasure in pushing him forward, as one always does with a willing learner.

Time sped on, and Sandy did not relapse into indolence, to the great joy of his father the deacon, and to the great mortification of the false prophets of Pledwell.

CHAPTER SECOND.

*'I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuin' fortune's sliddery ba'.*

Burns.

ANDREW BELL had been three years in the town, and Sandy had become an expert shopman, when the former called on Deacon Scott one day and told him that he had taken a shop in Langton. He said that he was making a living in Plodwell, but little more, and that he could do double the business in Langton. He proposed that Sandy should go with him and lodge with him, and promised to have an eye upon him as if he were his own son. With a good deal of reluctance, especially on the mother's side, it was at length agreed on ; so our two woollen drapers, with bag and baggage—not forgetting the golden sheep—removed to Langton, or, as our late minister would have phrased it—to a greater sphere of usefulness. Alack ! it scarcely turned out so in the long ran. There were no farewell suppers given in the Plodwell Arms in those days, with presentation snuff-boxes or walking-sticks to departing friends, accompanied by honeyed speeches, at once prospective and retrospective, and flavoured with thyme and rue, to make the tears run down the noses of all who heard or read them. No, no ; a glass of toddy on the eve of departure, and a shake of the hand by the side of the stage coach, was the sum of leave-taking in those unfeeling days. Yet fifty miles was a long journey then ; it is now but a trip before breakfast. Well, the town did feel rather dull after they left, for Andrew Bell was well liked, and Sandy Scott was a general favourite. But time soon fills up the void which has been made, or reconciles us to these things. Even parents become reconciled to the necessity of parting with their children when they are grown up. Three of the deacon's daughters were married and settled at a distance, and only Margaret and little Esther remained at home ; the eldest son had been away for many years, and yet for all that Mrs Scott went about her household duties as cheery as ever.

Sandy visited his friends in Plodwell now and then, and astonished the lasses with his fashionable finery. He said that Bell was doing a grand business in Langton, and hinted something about becoming a partner. Perhaps it was as well that the partnership was put off. It came out after a time that Andrew Bell became Mr Bell entirely in Langton, with his fashionable shop and stylish living ; and even Sandy, his shopman, became Mr Scott. And now it seemed

as if old affections were getting cooled down in this prosperous gale, for letters came less frequently from Sandy, and for a long while there were none for the deacon, who shook his head, while the mother surmised that her laddie wasna weel. At last came a letter with a vengeance—the grand get-up was down—a regular smash! Bell had absconded, and Sandy was appointed to sell off the stock for behoof of the creditors. It afterwards appeared that he had acquitted himself of this charge so entirely to their satisfaction that they extended their credit to him, and he continued in the shop on his own account. Here was a fortunate start for a young man of twenty-one.

Now, the way this came about ought to have been a warning ever before his eyes; but he had learned with his late master habits of extravagance, which, though now checked for a time, regained their ascendancy, and before two years were over he literally followed the example of Andrew Bell, leaving his creditors—who had so befriended him—in the lurch.

If I was writing a purely fictitious story, I might have an immaculate hero, like the paragons that have surfeited discerning readers from the advent of Sir Charles Grandison down to our own day; but I am sketching the life of a real man, who was guilty of great misconduct, for which he afterwards made all the atonement in his power. ‘There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.’ Ordinary mortals may thank their stars if this tide flows for them but once in their lives, and they able and ready to take it at the flood; but Sandy was favoured with fortunate tides several times in the course of his life, and at none of those times was he backward to take the advantage, so that after he left the ‘four stoops o’ misery’—an old name for the loom—he never voyaged long in the shallows, where the *unready* must paddle all their lives. Yet he failed to take the greatest flood of all, that would have led him on to fortune indeed, for, though personally ready to embark, he had left behind at Langton certain dishonoured papers, the malign influence of which reached him across the ocean. The sins even of a lucky man find him out.

Sandy was meantime on the ocean-stream, which in due time bore him to Calcutta, where he calculated upon finding a friend in his brother, whom he could not remember to have seen, unless he could mind of being rocked in his cradle at Plodwell. He had a shrewd guess, however, from the many tokens which arrived there from the East, accompanied by loving letters, that the East Indian had a leal heart to the auld town in Scotland, and to the kindred hearts he had left there. And so it proved. Robert received him more like a father meeting a long absent son

than as a brother meeting a brother whom he had not seen since he left him a child. He looked long and earnestly in his face, and old home-feelings brought the tears into his eyes as he said—

‘Sandy, you have the fair hair and the blue eyes of our mother. How is she, poor body, and our father and sisters?’

‘All well,’ said Sandy, ‘but I did not see them before I sailed.’

‘Not see them!’ exclaimed Robert.

And here our friend had to give an account of his late proceedings. Though he told the truth, which he knew could not be long hid, it is likely that he told it with some reservation or with much extenuation. It could scarcely be expected that the erring young man, who hoped to find in his brother a friend to assist him, should of his own free will lower himself down to zero in the estimation of that fraternal friend, who was an honourable merchant—one most likely to be a severe judge in such a case. Sandy afterwards told that his brother reproved him, but gently.

‘I am both glad and sorry to see you here,’ he said. ‘You have committed a fault that the commercial world will not soon forget, and will hardly forgive. You should not have run away. Why did you not consult our father, when— Pardon me, I wish not to reproach you. The evil is done. Let your future life be one great endeavour to obliterate the remembrance of this; and now let us drop the subject. Tell me about the folks at home.’

Long and late sat the brothers talking of father, mother, and sisters, and everything connected with home. All old friends were remembered and inquired about. Trivial things were—contrary to physical laws—magnified into objects of importance by distance of time and space. Robert was again sitting by his mother’s ‘clean hearthstane,’ or walking in the ‘humble garden with its bush of southernwood.’

Such reminiscences make but an oasis in the desert—rather, alas, the tantalising mirage, which whether stretching away into the past or future matters little. We must resume our march in the present over the arid sands.

Robert employed his brother in his own office, and kept him in his own house—he kept house, though a bachelor; but it would appear that for a long time he forbore to cumber him with much responsibility. He had the interests of others committed to his care, and though his affection was strong, yet duty with him was paramount. Now, however, Sandy, hitherto so careless, had become thoughtful; his innate propensity to enjoy the present and ignore the future seemed entirely subdued. He had ample oppor-

as I did affect
poor gain, for
and for a long
shook his head.
wasn't need
good get-up
should be
for school as
he had no
education
continued in
furniture was

Now, the
warning ev-
lent master
checked for
two years
Andrew D
himself

If I was
an immor-
dissolving
down to our
men, who
afterwards
is a tide in
leads on to
stars if they
they able an
favoured, will
of his life,
take the
stoops o' mi-
voyaged to
paddle all
flood of all
for, though

asunder: and before this could be satisfactorily accomplished, he was too far gone to undertake the fatigue of the voyage. He hoped that his brother—who had ably and faithfully managed the business during his illness—should succeed him as managing partner in India; but here they were—one of them at least—disappointed. The cautious London merchants had doubtless been inquiring about antecedents—as the phrase now is—and the result showed that Sandy's escapade at Langton was not entirely forgotten, verifying the words of Robert at their meeting, that he had been guilty of misconduct that the commercial world would be slow to forget or forgive. Sandy lost this flood-tide that would assuredly have led on to fortune, for his credentials were not forthcoming, so that he could not embark. Fortune had not yet, however, deserted her favourite. To do him justice, I believe this disappointment and consequent humiliation were all forgotten in his grief as he stood by the deathbed of that loving brother; and when all was over—when he closed the eyes that had never looked on him unkindly, who can doubt that ambition was then as dead within him? After he had laid the wasted form in the alien dust of that far country, his heart turned homeward with an impatient longing he had never felt before.

CHAPTER THIRD.

It's hame, hame, hame fain wad I be—
Fain wad I be hame to my ain countrie:

He knows nothing of home sickness who has never been far away, but he may imagine the intense longing that takes possession of the mind which retains unimpaired its strong home-feelings and remembrances, and he may conceive that in such a mind the yearning becomes stronger as the hope of return fades and dies. Robert Gilfillan's beautiful song, 'Oh, why left I my hame?' cast in a popular mould and set to appropriate music, has thrown into the shade its unacknowledged prototype, the genuine ballad of Allan Cunningham, which conveys the same feelings in more impassioned language—

'The sun comes back to summer,
And the blossom to the tree,
But I win back—O! never,
To my ain countrie.'

I do not mean to imply that our mercantile friend Sandy was so deeply imbued with the poetry of home, but that he was more fortunate than his brother, or the Jacobite hero of song—his foot was again on his native soil. But anxious

as he was to see his father and mother and his sisters, he was still more anxious to wipe away his reproach, that he might stand beneath the old roof-tree a free and honourable man. Certain legal forms had to be gone through in London, and as soon as his business was settled he took the mail coach for Scotland, and arrived in Langton seven years after he had left it in such a discreditable manner. He was glad it was dark when the coach drove up to the well-remembered inn. After supper he asked to see the landlord, who did not recognise him.

‘Don’t you know me, Mr Brown?’ he asked.

‘Indeed, sir, can’t say I have the pleasure, and yet—’

‘You think you should know me. Don’t you remember of a young shopkeeper taking French leave of Langton some seven years ago?’

‘What! Mr Scott—is it possible—from India? Glad to see you. Always suspected you were victimised by certain parties.’

‘You were not far wrong, but I was none the less to blame. Though young, I was not blind, but went headlong to ruin with my eyes open; and then, like a coward, fled from the responsibilities that I had not the courage to face.’

‘You are too severe on yourself.’

‘Not a bit. The truth must out, and my responsibilities must be faced now. Better late than never. I have never ceased to regret the past, and my mind will be easier when I have made all the atonement in my power. Is Mr Lyndsay, the writer, still alive?’

‘O yes, sir, still alive—still in the old chambers.’

‘Well, I will see him to-morrow, and make arrangements for settling with my creditors. Meantime, I should not like to be known in the town till—’

‘Ah, I understand. Quite right, sir. You may depend upon my discretion.’

‘When I have empowered Mr Lyndsay to meet all just claims against me, I shall start for Edinburgh, where I have left my servant, a coloured man, who would have attracted attention here, which, in the meantime, I wish to avoid.’

‘Excuse me, sir,’ said the landlord; ‘I thought you would have gone north.’

‘Not at present, Mr Brown—not till this business is settled, much as I wish to go. And now you will take a glass of wine with me and tell me all about old friends. Is Harry Smith still in Langton?’

‘O no, sir; he sailed for America. Don’t know what he’s doing there.’

‘And Jack Maxwell?’

‘Is in England. Captain Jones—you mind of Jones of

the 'Ruby'?—saw him lately in Liverpool—gave him some assistance—said he had no heels on his boots.'

'Ah! and Liston, the accountant?'

'Dead, Mr Scott; died in Glasgow—buried in a pauper's coffin with an old brown mortcloth.'

'O dear! my poor old companions. I'll ask no more. I am only mere fortunate—not more deserving. Yet, one other question. The Blairs—what of them?'

'Old Mr Blair has retired from business. His son is in the corn trade. Miss Blair is still unmarried, and mistress of her father's house. By the way, wasn't she a sweetheart of yours before you went away?'

'She was a fine girl, Ellen,' he replied, 'and I had a great regard for her; but she was very young then—not eighteen. I'm glad that in my folly I did not urge her into any engagement which she, poor girl, might have been sorry either to keep or to break.'

'She is a handsome girl still, Mr Scott, and as gude as she's bonnie. I have heard my wife say that she has had some good offers, all of which she has declined, and—my wise woman insinuates—on account of a certain old flame that has been kept alive by correspondence.'

'Not for these five years past. I wrote her under cover to her aunt, but somehow one of my letters came into the hands of Mr Blair, who then wrote me a very insulting note, and the correspondence ended.'

'I see,' said Mr Brown, 'how it had occurred. The aunt died some five years ago, and your letter fell into the hands of Mr Blair. He was one of her executors.'

'That then explains all. But I never blamed Ellen, nor bound her by any promise; for, till I had redeemed my character, and could provide for a comfortable home, I could not seriously think of marriage. I could not have accomplished all that for some years yet, had not my late brother left me the means.'

'Your brother is dead then?'

'Yes, Mr Brown, my brother—my second father I may call him—died nearly a year ago. He would fain have come home when it was too late. He became convinced that it was so, and resigned himself to his fate. I am here by his last request, which he knew to be my most earnest desire.'

'And do you think of settling here?'

'It will depend upon circumstances. Robert left me a moderate competence, but I must have something to do here or elsewhere. He has left my father and mother a provision for life, and a handsome legacy to each of my sisters, so that I am free from anxiety on their account in a pecuniary way. I can look about me for a time until I

can see my way clearly. Now, my friend, I need not remind you that these are personal and family matters.'

'You know you need not,' replied his host; 'even my wife shall hear nothing but what you choose to tell her yourself. By the way, shall I introduce you? She will be glad to see you.'

'Excuse me to-night; I am rather tired, and will soon go to bed.'

'Well, good-night. You will breakfast with us to-morrow.'

'With pleasure. Good night.'

Such was the substance of a conversation picked up long after at a certain tea-table—but I am anticipating. As a story-teller I am somewhat like Wallace's sword which cut before the point, as every schoolboy fifty years ago knew right well.

Well, Sandy—he is still Sandy with me as with the deacon his father—went to bed to think about Ellen Blair before he fell asleep, and most likely, tired as he was, to dream of her after. He had got it into his head that she had remained so long single on his account, and it flattered his vanity, of which he had his own share. Ladies are not the only creatures that like flattery, for the surest way to the hearts of men—puppies don't know if they have hearts or not—most undoubtedly lies through their vanity; it is so sweet to be beloved. Certain it is that our friend made up his mind that night in the Commercial Inn to see Ellen Blair the next day, contrary to his original intention—a resolve not over wise, as will appear. But when was even a wise man wise where a woman was concerned?

Next day he called at Mr Lyndsay's office, made himself known, and his business, to that gentleman's great satisfaction, who complimented him on his present position, and highly praised his integrity. While looking over the names of creditors, and the amount of their claims—for he had had something to do in the matter formerly—he said, 'By-the-by, Mr Scott, I think the late Mr Wilson had some claim against you.'

'Yes, certainly—Steward Wilson. You said the late—he is then dead!'

'Two years ago—he died insolvent; creditors took all. His widow and family left the town, I believe, in great poverty.'

'Find them out, sir, at any cost; their claim is doubly sacred. Surely the creditors of Mr Wilson will not be so hard as to pounce upon this poor godsend to the widow and children. If so, I will offer them some compensation.'

'It does me good to hear you, sir,' cried Mr Lyndsay, rubbing his hands. 'Depend upon it, this is truly throwing your bread upon the waters; you will find it again in

your own self-respect and in the respect of others. When do you leave town ?

‘ I intend leaving by the three o’clock coach. Here is my Edinburgh address.’

‘ Very well. You shall have a daily bulletin after the campaign commences.’

Sandy returned to his inn, and sat down by the window. The day was drizzly, and scarcely a creature was to be seen on the street. To him who had lived in a great city, the little town seemed like a deserted village. His thoughts were soon centred on Ellen Blair, and on his probable reception. He had some misgivings, more especially about the welcome he might meet from her father, when, as fate would have it, he recognised old Mr Blair passing along the street. He watched the enemy until he went out of sight in an opposite direction to his house. Now, said he to himself, now is my time. He that hankers after Hesperian fruit never stickles about stealing a march on an old dragon, he or she ; but he sometimes catches a tartar. Our friend was at the well-known door in a moment. It so chanced that while he awaited its opening he was seen and recognised by a lynx-eyed passer-by, who, shortly after, meeting Mr Blair, informed him of the honour that was being done him in his absence by an old acquaintance. All unconscious, Sandy gravely inquired of the maid if Mr Blair was within.

‘ No, sir.’

‘ Is Miss Blair at home ?’

‘ Yea, sir.’

‘ Be so good as tell her that an old friend wishes to see her.’

He heard a well-remembered voice from the parlour—

‘ Who can it be, Maggie ? Bid the gentleman step in.’

He entered the room, seized her hand, and forgetting what he meant to say, only uttered the one word, ‘ Ellen !’

She gazed, she reddened like the rose,
 Syne pale as ony lily.

But she did not fall in his arms, like the soldier’s Nannie ; only stammered out—

‘ Sir—really—I—no, it can’t—yes, it is—’

‘ Yea, Ellen, it is your old friend back from India. Won’t you bid him welcome ?’

‘ Oh, yes—dear me—I’m so confused—sit down. Have you seen my father ?’

‘ I have, but he did not see me. I have come, Nelly, as soon as I was able, to pay my old debts like an honest man ; but I don’t wish to see him till I can look every man in the face. I had a letter from him some years ago, in which he told me what he thought of me.’

‘Oh ! I knew it—he never told me, but I knew it—after my aunt’s death—and you were angry, and never wrote again.’

‘I wrote again—it was of no avail—but I never blamed you, Nelly.’

‘Oh ! but I was more wicked—can you forgive me ?

‘I have nothing to forgive ; but you have much. Had I not acted like a fool and a rascal, you might have loved me, and we might have been—’

‘Hark—there’s my father.’

The old man walked into the room, and fixing his eyes on Sandy, said sternly—

‘To what, sir, do I owe the honour of this visit in my absence ?’

‘To my respect for Miss Blair, sir,’ answered he, somewhat haughtily.

‘A pretty way of showing respect,’ said the old cynic, sneeringly. ‘We will dispense with such manifestations in future.’

‘And I, sir,’ said the indignant visitor, ‘will dispense with such manifestations of civility in future !’ Turning to the lady, he said—‘Good bye, ma’am’; but seeing her distress, his manner softened, and taking her hand, he added kindly, ‘God bless you, Ellen’—and, with a stiff bow to her father, he disappeared.

He shut himself up in his room till the horn blew—shook hands with the host and hostess—entered the coach, and in due time arrived in Edinburgh, where he remained until a communication from his lawyer brought him back to Langton, where he was invited to an entertainment in the Commercial Inn by his former creditors, and presented with a handsome testimonial in honour of his upright conduct. He had the pleasure of hearing from one of the party that the creditors of the late Mr Wilson, on hearing of his intentions, in case of an arrestment, had been shamed into something like generosity, and had renounced all further claims, so that the widow had now sufficient to keep the wolf from the door until her boys could do something for themselves. Never had our friend passed a happier night. He was pleased with himself—the true secret of happiness. Never had he exerted his powers so happily. He left an impression on the minds of his entertainers of his talents no less than his integrity ; that this impression was permanent was abundantly proved in the future. Next morning a new vehicle, fresh from the coachmaker’s, with a spirited horse —both purchased in Edinburgh—stood at the inn door in charge of the Indian servant.

‘You’ll astonish the Plodwellians,’ said the landlord.

‘Well,’ said Sandy, ‘I plead guilty of a little vanity, while I lay claim to some knowledge of the world. Were I

reduced to rags to-morrow, all my new-blown honours would not be worth a week's purchase, so we must keep up appearances. Good-bye till we meet again. And now for the auld toun.'

And did he not astonish the auld toun that day? I well remember, 'twas a fine evening in autumn, when a dashing curricle containing a foreign-looking gentleman and a black flunkie whirled along the street, and drew up at Deacon Scott's door. The boys forsook their play and came running from all quarters. Doors and windows were crowded with eager faces, and all the dogs in Plodwell were in uproar. Men and women gathered in groups at every corner, and it was bruited about that Sandy Scott was new Alexander Scott, Esq., and that he was a rich nabob, and had come hame from India in a coach wi' a blackamoor like the ane aboon Johnnie Puff's tobacco shop. There was nothing else talked of in the town that night. Some said he had found a mine o' gowd; others that his brother had left him a sugar plantation and a hunder slaves; and some waggish loon told the wives that he had married a black woman and had gotten the weight o' her in gowd for a tocher; and that she wadna trust him to come and see his folk without sending her brither wi' him to look after him and bring him back; and another rogue set the grannies a-whispering that he had sell'd himsel' to the deil for as muckle siller as he could spend, but that the fowl fiend maun aye be wi' him, gang where he may, in the shape o' a black flunkie.

The deacon came to the door, and looked at the crowd with a comical expression, and when he went in again he said—

‘What the deil made you bring that black chiel wi' you, Sandy? There's as mony at the door as wad eat him.’

‘Never mind, father; he'll be a treat to them to look at. They wont eat him.’

‘But, laddie,’ said his mother, ‘will ye tak him to the kirk wi' you the morn? If ye dae, naebody will look at the minister.’

‘He wont go to the kirk, mother.’

‘What! she exclaimed. ‘You dinna mean to say he's a heathen surely?’

‘Something of the sort,’ he replied; ‘but I daresay he is not the only heathen in Plodwell.’

‘Is he a married man?’ inquired Esther, the only daughter now at home.

‘What!’ exclaimed her brother, ‘is my little sister to fancy my black dandy?’

‘No, no,’ said she, laughing; ‘you have not fancied a black lady, you know.’

But let us leave them in their domestic privacy. I have

forborne to allude to their meeting, which may be more easily imagined than described.

Sandy stayed some weeks at home, then went to Edinburgh, from that to London, where he spent the winter. He returned early in the spring, and took Kincairn House for the season ; hunted with the neighbouring lairds, and seemed to have as much confidence in Fortune as Julius Cæsar. The deacon shook his head, and said that Sandy was better qualified to spend a fortune than to make one. As the amount of his wealth was unknown to the public, it was considered inexhaustible. He was known by the soubriquet of 'The Nabob,' and that phrase was as significant to the folks of that time as a millionaire is to their children at the present day.

Our nabob was in Langton one day, and met his old enemy (Mr Blair) in the reading-room, who apologised for his former rudeness, and, to test the sincerity of Mr Scott's forgiveness, invited him home to dinner. He there met young Mr Blair, who laughed immensely at his father's expense, and at his sister's too. Sandy contrived somehow to be a few minutes in private with the young lady : probably little contrivance was required, for it was understood that they had corresponded through the winter.

'There is peace between us now, Nelly,' he said, slipping an arm round her waist ; 'will you not sign the treaty ?'

'How ?' she inquired, blushing.

'With your lips,' he whispered.

I have never heard that she refused. They were married soon after this. Sandy and his brother-in-law became partners in business. Next year he was elected a member of the town council. About this time the great agitation for reform commenced. The provost was in declining health. Sandy did all the speechifying, presided at all reform meetings, and became so indispensable that, on the provost's resignation of office on account of continued ill health, he was unanimously raised over the heads of the bailies to the office of chief magistrate.

An able and upright magistrate was the provost of Langton—late the ne'er-do-well wabster loon of Plodwell ; but his father the deacon always said, 'It cam mair by luck than gude guidin,' and hence arose his second soubriquet. The 'Nabob' was forgotten in 'The Lucky Man.'

THE SQUIRE O' LOW DEGREE.

My luve's a flouir in gardin faire,
Her beautie charms the sicht o' men ;
And I'm a weed upon the wolde,
For nane recke how I fare and fen' ;—
She blumes in bield o' castil wa',
I bide the blast o' povertie,
My covert looks are treasures stown—
Sae how culd my luve think o' me ?

My luve is like the dawn o' day—
She wears a veil o' woven mist,
And hoarie cranreuch deftly flouired
Lies paling on her maiden breist ;
Her kirtle doun her jimpie waist
Has studs o' gowd to clasp it wi'—
She decks her haire wi' pearls rare,
And how culd my luve think o' me ?

My cloak is o' the Friesland grey,
My doublit o' the gay Walloon,
I wear the spurs o' siller sheen,
And yet I am a landless loon ;
I ride a steed o' Flanders' breed,
I beare a sword upon my thie,
And that is a' my graith and gear,
Sae how culd my luve think o' me ?

My luve's rose-lips breathe sweit perfume,
Twa pearlie raws peere fair atween ;
The happie dimpils dent her cheiks,
And diements lowe in her dark een ;—
Her haire is o' the gowden licht,
But dark the fringis o' her bree ;
Her smile wold warm cauld winter's herte,
But how culd my luve blink on me ?

My luve is tended like a queene—
She sits amang her maries faire ;
There's ane to send, and ane to sew,
And ane to kaim her gowden haire.
The lute is for her fingers sma'—
Her lips are meet for melodie ;
My herte is fu', my een run ower,—
Oh ! how culd my luve think o' me ?

My luve she sits her palfrey white,
Mair fair to see than makkar's dream
O' faery queene on munebeam bricht,
Or mermaid on the saut sea faem ;
A beltit knicht is by her side—
I'm but a squire o' low degree—
A baron halds her bridil reine,
And how culd my luve think o' me ?

But I will don the pilgrim weids,
And boune me till the Haly Land,
A' for the sake o' my deare luve,
To keip unstained my herte and hand ;
And when this world is gane to wrack,
Wi' a' its pride and vanitie,
Within the blessed bouris o' heaven
We there may meit, my luve and me !

THE DEAD HORSEMAN OF VEITTE'S GEIL.

' You are on the brink of an abyss, the high mountain ridge hanging over your head, the more frightful steep sinking perpendicularly from your feet; on the opposite side of the geil, the wildest torrents tumbling down hundreds of fathoms; at the bottom, the river, foaming and roaring, rushes on with the rapidity of an arrow.

They set the dead man astride upon a horse, tied his legs under the belly, and fastened a bag of hay to the horse's shoulders, to which the body leaned forward, and was made fast, and in this manner the dead man rode over the mountains to his grave—a fearful horseman!—*Chambers's Journal.*

WHERE Norway rears her hills of snow,
And scoops her frightful geils between,
The Norseman hath his highland home ;
There dwelt, amid the savage scene,
Old Harold and his hardy sons,
Cut off from Nordland valleys green.

When God, who gives and takes away,
Took one from that fraternal band,
They laid him in a grave of snow
Till Spring and Summer, hand in hand,
Like fair twin sisters, came again
To smile upon that dreary land.

They come ! hark to the rushing streams !—
Up from thy wintry tomb arise
Pale horseman of the icy cliffs ;
Thy train awaits, with weeping eyes :
Arise ! and ride to Lister Vale,
Where kindred dust in slumber lies.

Thy pioneers the path prepare ;
Loose tottering stones are downward hurled,
And steps are cut in glacier snow :
The dead may go where life is perilled,
Where never man was borne on bier
By mourners to the silent world,

Ah ! mother, turn thy eyes away ;
 Now, father, look not on thy son ;
 Haste, brothers, bind him on his steed :
 Away the mournful train is gone,
 By slippery steep and narrow ledge,
 Meet for the mountain goat alone.

As, sure of foot, that native steed
 With fearful caution felt his way
 Through the cloven mountain, in whose heart
 The stars look down at noon of day,—
 Where foaming floods and shapeless rocks
 Are tossed and strewn in wild deray :

And as he rode, that horseman grim
 Swung to and fro from side to side,
 Now leaning o'er the dizzy brink,
 With leaden eyes reöpened wide,
 Where none but the brave would dare to tread,
 Where none but the dead would dare to ride !

From every cleft, from every crag,
 The birds of prey came forth to fare ;
 The vulture hung upon the wind,
 The raven winged the nether air ;
 He heeded not, that ghastly man,
 The harpies that were hovering there,

The torrents leapt into the gulf—
 Leapt at a bound from day to night,
 And foam-flakes from the boiling floods
 Flew upward, flashing into light,
 Like sea-birds through the briny mist,
 When ocean waves are raging white.

The river, like a flood of snow,
 Rushed down between the mountain walls ;
 The beetling crags hung over-head,
 And yawned the subterranean halls,
 Where, blindly groping evermore,
 Dark Horror rolls his sightless balls !

Now pendant streams and sloping lakes,
Coagulated masses hoar,
That long had clung to slippery rocks,
Can keep their desperate hold no more :
Affrighted Echo flies afar—
Old Chaos hears the dread uproar !

But, by the dead, unheeded all
The foaming torrents of the geils,
The snowy peaks that pierce the sky,
The gulfs that drizzly darkness fills—
The thunders of the avalanche
That shake the everlasting hills !

Pale rider ! onward to the vale
Where thy departed sires have gone :
A peaceful grave awaiteth thee ;
Thy bones shall be with grass o'ergrown.
Now, fearful horseman ! rest in peace—
The task of life and death is done.

THE DYING MAN AT SEA.

(R.R., A young man, died at sea, on the passage home from America, 1848.)

'Tis sad to die at sea—my weary head
Is rocked on restless billows—I must bear
The pains of death, unsoothed by sorrowing love—
A warning voice is whispering in my ear,
'Thou ne'er again wilt land on earthly shore,
Father or mother, thou wilt see no more.'

A home-sick yearning preys upon my heart,
And fain the wanderer would be home to die.
O, for a green grave in the old churchyard !
Where kindred feet might linger, I would lie ;
But ah, the hoarse waves murmuring claim my clay,
Chafing impatient of dull death's delay.

I lie awake, tossed in my stifling berth,
The weary night I hear the whistling breeze,
The creaking timbers and the flapping sails,
And ceaseless beating of the surging seas,
That press around me like besieging fears,
Muttering and moaning in my dying ears,

And monstrous shapes my sickly fancy sees,
To stir the lank hair on my clammy brow—
O, I would rather feed the hungry worm !
But why should care of flesh annoy me now—
If that my soul may mingle with the blest,
Let earth or ocean be my place of rest.

Yes, let me lie, down many a fathom deep,
In grove of coral, or in shelly cave,
All still and silent as my sleep profound,
Far, far beneath the strife of wind and wave,
Down, where the quiet waters will not bear
A rippling sound to mock my senseless ear,

I dreamed of wandering underneath the waves,
O'er sands bestrewn with pearls and glittering
ore,
In lands submerged, and cities of old time,
Through weedy jungles stretched from shore to
shore,
Up mountains high that passed the watery bound,
Whose tops were isles, with green bananas
crowned.

And as I wandered in that nether world,
Methought the waters were but denser skies,
And through the waves upheaving o'er my head
A radiant turmoil charmed my wondering eyes ;
And fleets of ships like thunder-clouds were driven
Athwart the zenith of my watery heaven.

All-wondrous ocean ! in thy silent deeps
God's creatures live, His gracious care partaking,
And on the summits of thy mountain peaks,
Those fearful reefs whereon white waves are
breaking,
His creatures live, and build His solid land,
Who holds thee in the hollow of His hand.

Father of all ! in deep abasement here,
And trembling awe, I humbly trust in Thee ;
Thou wilt reclaim me from the mighty deep,
For His dear sake that died upon the tree.
Then welcome Death—let billows o'er me roll,—
Father ! I come : receive my parting soul.

THE HUNGER FIEND.

[Written when the Corn Laws were in full operation,—with cheap work and dear bread. It appeared in 'Tait's Magazine,' and various other journals.]

As one who in a lonesome road,
Doth walk in fear and dread ;
And, having once looked back, goes on,
And turns no more his head :
For why ? he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

ANCIENT MARINER.

I AM the Hunger Fiend :
Who hath not heard of me ?
My home—my native hell,
Is the Island of the Free.
For I am not of heaven ;
Nor do I owe my birth
To devils, but to men :
The honoured of the earth
Beget the Hunger Fiend !

And they have pampered me,
These noble sires of mine,
With flesh of living men :
Ho ! Death, the bones are thine !
When in their sunken cheeks
I've writ my horrid name,
Give them to Mother Earth—
We play a deadly game—
Come, follow the Hunger Fiend !

The Land of Trade is mine,
Where thousands feel my pangs ;
Where many an honest heart
Is poisoned with my fangs ;
Aye, many a noble soul,
Defiled in ravenous clay :
Though the Church hath lordly priests,
For wretched men to pray—
They pray for the Hunger Fiend !

The famished city cries,
 To the cold insensate air,
 The while her idle hands
 Are clasp'd in despair :
 Saith Hope, 'She yet may ply
 Her countless iron wheels—
 The fulness of the earth
 Awaits her thousand keels :'
 'Ha, ha !' quoth the Hunger Fiend.

'Tis there the mother weeps
 For the babe that's yet unborn,
 While the weary father sleeps ;
 But I wake him up at morn :
 Ah ! he can sleep no more—
 The wail of want he hears,
 And his burning brain is full
 Of desperate thoughts and fears :
 Am I not the Hunger Fiend ?

Britannia ! rejoice
 In thy loyal sons of toil,
 Who eat no alien bread,
 For love of thy poor soil :
 Thou shalt have soldiers yet,
 And seamen for thy fleets,
 And felons for thy jails,
 And harlots for thy streets—
 While I'm thy Hunger Fiend !

All hail ! thou Island Queen !
 Let my honoured sires rejoice
 In thy army's proud array,
 In thy navy's thunder voice :
 Ho ! nobles, laugh to scorn
 The curses of my prey ;
 On with the festival :
 Pour out the wine—hurra !
 For the terrible Hunger Fiend.

NOTE TO THE HUNGER FIEND.

The Hunger Fiend was written upwards of thirty years ago, before the repeal of the Corn Laws. I remember hearing women, when bread was dear, asking men, when would the ports be open? It was galling to poor people to pay nearly double price for bread, while there was plenty of grain ready for our markets which was not allowed to come in, that rents might be kept up. Since the repeal of these laws, bread has been cheaper, and to shame our political prophets, rents have risen instead of falling. About 1828, I think, four hundred ministers of the Church of Scotland petitioned Parliament to make no alteration in the Corn Laws, *because the amount of their stipends depended on the price of grain*. In other words their petition was, do not give the people cheap bread lest you reduce our incomes. How, I would ask could intelligent people reverence these men? Some of the magnates of those days seem to have thought that bread was only for the rich, and that poor folks should live without it. There was a little book of good advice published then, by a Scotch laird, and addressed to his cottars. He was a Sir Francis—something; oh, ungrateful memory that fails to preserve his ever-to-be-honoured name! This honourable baronet thus counsels his labourers: 'I would recommend porridge and milk for breakfast—so far good, but mark what follows—' and for dinner, a quarter of a pound of bacon, which, of your own curing, will not cost you above a penny; a handful of oatmeal, say a halfpenny; then you may have vegetables at discretion from your own garden, which will cost you nothing; thus you will have an excellent family dinner for the small sum of three-halfpence. For supper you may take a little sowens, or a few potatoes.' Here is a dietary to support health and strength, and it appears proposed in sober earnest. This philanthropist's family dinner consists of about eight ounces of solid food, barring the greens, for six persons, the average number of a family, all hungry from fresh air or country labour. Persons in easy circumstances may smile at the absurdity of such a regimen, which allows only one meal, the breakfast, that would really allay the cravings of hunger. But a rankling sense of insult overcomes our sense of the ridiculous, when a rich man thus insults the poverty of the poor. Yet this wretched stuff was quoted in a popular journal, and recommended to public notice. Another gentleman, through the medium of the same journal, propounds the following luminous question. 'If a man with ten shillings a-week supports his family; suppose he gets an advance of a shilling weekly, could he not support them as formerly on the ten, and save the other shilling?' To this the querist evidently expects an answer in the affirmative from all reasonable men. Yes, though wife and children shiver in rage; though cold, with all its generation of diseases, play havoc among the pinched and puny brood, by all means save the weekly shilling to buy little shrouds and coffins, when jackets, frocks, and shoes will no more be required. Oh! much abused shade of Doctor Malthus, rest in peace; thy farthing candle is put out, eclipsed by these luminaries of a later age. The journal referred to, after it took such gentlemen teachers into special favour, lost the favour of the working men of Scotland, and fell from its proud position of foremost and best of cheap periodicals—fell never to rise again to be the pride of the north country.

ARBROATH ABBEY.

Lone lingering in the Old Churchyard,
And gazing on these mouldering walls,
The stately pile of other days,
The recreative mind recalls.
Deep musing here, as day declines,
And silence lulls the dinsome town,
I needs must dream of ages past,
Ere creed and church were overthrown.

I tread a roofless temple floor,
Where many a pilgrim foot hath trod ;
I stand where brave King Robert knelt—
Wave, Fancy ! wave thy magic rod !
Ha ! see uprise the ponderous walls—
Upshoot the clustering columns high ;
The roof is arching o'er my head,
Upheld between me and the sky.

And see the transept circle bright,
So high above the tuneful choir,
Pours down a flood of rainbow light
On king and priest, and knight and squire ;
And shivered in a thousand rays
On pillar, cusp, and carving quaint—
Illuming mask and dusky niche,
And many a rudely-sculptured saint.

Where huge columnar shadows throw
Their giant length along the nave,
Are kneeling, hushed in reverend awe.
Rude men of iron, fierce and brave ;
But helm is not on warrior's head,
Nor hauberk on his shoulders there ;
No mailed hand makes the sacred sign,
Nor armed heel treads the house of prayer.

Now, hark ! the Abbot lifts his voice,
 And prays for Scotland and her king ;
 That Jesu from His heavenly throne
 Would look upon our sorrowing,
 And pity this war-wasted land ;
 That Mary, virgin queen ! mote plead
 That He would will poor Scotland's weal,
 And shield her in her utmost need.

Now solemn music thrills my ear ;
 The choir chaunt forth the sacred strain
 That echoing peals from arch to arch,
 And swells through all the mighty fane ;
 Seems every stone to find a tongue,
 And join the choral hymn of praise,
 To melt the fierce and vengeful men
 That know not mercy's gentle ways.

And now beyond the sacred gates
 I hear the tramp of harnessed men,
 The clank of steel, the neigh of steed ;
 I see a knight and goodly train ;
 He bears a scroll—oh, now I know !
 They mount, they vanish while I gaze,
 And bear the bold protest to Rome
 That will the monkish world amaze.

I turn my dream-bewildered eyes ;
 Alas ! what do I now behold ?
 A roofless ruin all around,
 Through which the night wind bloweth cold ;
 But yet I love these mould'ring walls :
 'Twas here in early years I played,—
 My father's and my mother's bones
 Within this hallowed ground are laid.

NOTE TO ARBROATH ABBEY.

King Robert Bruce, and his Barons assembled in council or parliament at the Abbey of Aberbrothock, on the 6th day of April, 1320, and drew up the famous letter to the Pope, which for independence of spirit and language is the most remarkable document of the age, considering the servile submission to Rome then general over all Christendom. After asserting the independence of the ancient Kingdom of Scotland, and relating how King Edward of England treacherously took advantage of the confidence reposed in him by the nation, when it was without King or head, to advance claims of sovereignty, and enforce them on a people unprepared and divided among themselves by his invasions, slaughters, and rapine, thereby reducing the country to the utmost extremity of distress and misery, the document goes on to allude to the deliverance of the nation under the leading of Bruce. 'At length it pleased God, who alone can heal the wounded, to restore us to freedom from these innumerable calamities, by our most serene Prince, King, and Lord, Robert, who, for the deliverance of his people, and his own rightful deliverance from the hand of the enemy, did, like another Maccabeus, or Joshua, most cheerfully undergo all manner of toil, fatigue, and hazard. Divine Providence, through the right of succession by the laws and customs of the kingdom, which we will defend till death, and with the due and lawful assent and consent of the people, made him our King and Prince. To him we are obliged and resolved to adhere in all things, both on account of his right, and his merits, in having restored and secured to us the possession of our Liberties. But, after all, if he shall leave the principles he has so nobly asserted, and consent that we, or our kingdom shall be subjected to the king of England, we will immediately endeavour to expel him as our enemy, and as the subverter both of his own and our rights, and will make a king who will defend our liberties; because as long as a hundred of us shall remain alive, we will never subject ourselves to the dominion of the English; for it is not glory, riches, nor honour, but liberty alone that we fight and contend for, which no upright man will lose but with life itself.' Towards the end of the letter, they point out to his Holiness, the awful responsibility he assumes. 'But if your Holiness shall be too credulous of English misrepresentations, and not give credence to what we have said, nor desist to favour the English to our destruction, we must believe that the Most High will lay to your charge all the blood, loss of souls, and other calamities, that shall follow, on either hand between us and them.'

Mr JOHN BRENNAR, in his 'History of the Abbey' assumes that this letter was favourably received by the Pope. Mr DAVID MILLER, in his book 'Arbroath and its Abbey,' seems to think that it had not been sent to Rome after all. He says, 'The writer of a manuscript Accomp of the Familie of Hamilton, in Panmure House, concludes, *very justly*, that this celebrated letter was never delivered to the Pope, seeing that the principal writing, duly sealed, has been found among the Scottish records.' He thinks it probable that Bruce, 'dissatisfied because the hereditary right to the kingdom was not sufficiently recognised in it, had forbidden the transmission of the document.' There is no doubt that his claim by hereditary right Bruce could not afford to dispense with. It is acknowledged, though not prominently brought out, and surely he would have had influence enough in his council to suggest

terms were explicit had he wished it so. At all events I should think that an exact duplicate of such an important paper would be sure to be deposited among the Scottish records.

THOMAS CARLYLE has just now been raking up all the iniquities of Prussia for ages past. She has long been a bloody aggressor, and a thief by habit and repart. The Germans know all that, to their cost, and they would be fools if they did not crush her now when they have the chance, and make her disgorge her ancient plunder. A new era of compulsory restitution is to be inaugurated. When will it end? The Germans are an honest people, as they only steal from one another, with an occasional slice from a poor neighbour, such as Poland, who could not, it seems, make a good use of her own. As for Denmark, she was rightly punished for being a receiver of stolen goods. Brandenburg grew up into Prussia the Great in a most conscientious way. So has Great Britain extended her power and dominion far and wide, doing all the while as she would like to be done to. All this is to be inferred from the one-sided view Carlyle offers to the public. If young people are apt to let pity influence their judgment, old people are apt to prechim their judgment after their sympathies are dead, or paralyzed on one side. Emperor William and Thomas Carlyle would spread death and destruction and incalculable misery over a whole nation because its former rulers were robbers and murderers, forgetting what says, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay.' These old men would rather worship Nemesis.

'The young men will brand at the evening board,
But the old men will draw at the dawning sword.'

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A LITTLE GIRL.

My little darling is no more,
My loving pet is gone ;
She charmed me with her winning ways,
I loved her as my own :
For she would leave the merry game,
So glad to see me come,
And clasp me with her little hand,
To lead me kindly home.

That day I laid her on my bed,
When she fell sick at play,
'I'll lie till uncle come again,'
The stricken one did say.
I went from home, and came again,
To see her lying there,
But Death had claimed the life denied,
Denied to many a prayer.

I came, alas ! too late to hear
Her uncomplaining sighs—
To look upon the waning light
In those benighted eyes ;
Yet brooding Fancy pictures all,
Like sad Remembrance now,
The hours of pain that lay like years
Upon the fair young brow.

Oh Death ! relentless as thou art,
I know thou sparest none,
Yet thus to strike the gamesome lamb,
Our only little one ;
To gloat upon her dying pains
In merciless delay,
So like a cruel savage beast
That dallies with its prey.

But she is gone ; life's bitter brine
Will never drench her more.

Poor skiff! short while upon the sea,
 Soon stranded on the shore ;
 Soon left by the receding tide,
 To moulder and decay,
 That should have skimmed the waves of life
 For many a happy day.

'Tis vain to ask, Why fade the flowers,
 Why early fade and die,
 Why rank weeds cumber long the soil
 Where blighted blossoms lie ?
 Why death respites life-weary age,
 While youth may plead in vain,
 And poisons thus the bitter cup
 To mourners that remain ?

We cannot lift ourselves from earth,
 Or set our hearts above ;
 We cannot love the things of heaven
 With holy heavenly love ;
 For earthly, of the earth are we,
 Our idols are of clay,
 Shrined in our hearts, though well we know
 Death takes them all away.

Yet, would we wish them to return
 To this sad world of ours,
 That sorrow from their tearless eyes
 Might rain the bitter showers ?
 Would we, to ease our hearts of grief,
 Their souls of joy bereave ?
 Oh, no ! we but regret and sigh—
 'Tis for ourselves we grieve.

Our blossom, from the tree of life
 Untimely plucked, before
 That sin could soil its folded leaves,
 We should not thus deplore.
 But, ah ! we hear the pulse of Time
 Now, in our lonely home,
 When she, our blithesome bird of joy,
 Lies in the silent tomb.

TO MY LITTLE BOY.

I FAIN would be thy guide, my child,
And guard thee where I have been foiled ;
If thou must bide the brunt of life,
I would forearm thee for the strife :
The golden rule without alloy
Man will not keep, my little boy !

I would not thou shouldst be, my child,
A simple man, so meanly mild
As hug the mire beneath the tramp
Of any overbearing scamp ;
Nor would I have thee wrangling still
At strife for every petty ill,—
But bravely bear the world's annoy
With lightsome heart, my little boy !

Though I must leave thee poor, my child,
From costly pleasures' haunts exiled—
Thou may'st enjoy the summer air,
And flowers and music, sweet and fair ;
May'st have a book at thy desire,
Beside the winter evening fire !
Those costly pleasures sting or cloy,
Let these be thine, my little boy !

And give not up thy heart, my child,
To mad ambition's projects wild ;
Nor cherish thou insane desires
Within thee, like consuming fires :
Or thou wilt simple pleasures scorn,
And they will leave thee all forlorn,
And thou wilt nothing else enjoy
So sweet again, my little boy !

Go ; fight the fight of life, my child,
 And keep thy honour undefiled ;
 Revere thy God, my darling one !
 And love thou well thy brother man ;
 And man may trust thee, and employ—
 And God will bless my little boy !

THE HOWES O' KINNABER.

The hand that smote its kindred heart
 Was prone to deeds of mercy—
 He who thy being gave shall judge of thee alone.

CAMPBELL.

'TWAS in Kinnaber's howes sae green,
 That we were wont to wander,
 Before we wist that time and tide
 Wad part us wide asunder.
 Now waes me for the bonnie green howes,
 And the lanely bowers o' brachen ;
 O waes me for the flowery swaird
 By lovers' feet forsaken !

The wild rose blooms, and fades, and fa's,
 Untouched by hand o' maiden ;
 Nae silken gown to brush the dew,
 Nor coat o' hamely plaidin' ;
 Nae bard to haunt the greenwood glade
 When weird night winds are raving,
 And eerie gleams o' wan moonshine
 Wi' the shadows deftly waving.

'Twas there the fause love pu'd a rose,
 To be a true love token ;
 But gowd maun clasp luve's tender bands,
 Or eithly are they broken.
 She pu'd a flower in blooming prime,
 That leal true love had hallowed,
 And cast it on the stream o' life,
 E'en as a weed that's swallowed.

He wandered there, the hapless youth,
 When the lonesome owl was crying ;
 As a lingering ghost may haunt the place
 Where the whitening bones are lying.
 He wandered there the lee-lang night,
 His luckless love bemoaning,
 Until the twinkling stars grew dim
 In th' red light o' the dawning.

Sweet sleep, the dew o' life, fell down
 On the weary wORLD o' labour,
 And hushed the blithesome birds to rest
 In the green howes o' Kinnaber,
 O life becomes a heavy load,
 The waefu' wight to cumber,
 Who may not close his weary een
 In the blessed rest o' slumber,

Ah ! kindly hearts—ye weel may sigh,
 To hear his mournful story ;
 The dark locks on his youthful brow
 Grew all untimely hoary.
 He was the blithesome Bard o' Esk—
 The pride o' dale and borough ;
 O wae betide the cruel guile
 That pierced his bosom thorough.

She plighted faith, that maiden fair,
 Wi' mony a tender token ;
 Wi' mony a kiss she sealed the vows
 That her fause lips had spoken.
 O wha could think that heart sae base
 Lay in sae fair a bosom ;
 O wha could think that deadly weed
 Wad bear sae sweet a blossom ?

The king o' day, i' the glowing west,
 His jaded steeds was stalling,
 And the queen o' night, to the starry ha',
 Her glittering train recalling ;

The lover hied to the howes sae green,
 To wait by the doleful river ;
 But a gowden shower on the maiden fell—
 His fause love meets him never.

The cares o' men were nought to him—
 To him, the sad forsaken ;
 Nor blooming flowers, nor blithesome birds
 That sang amang the brachen ;
 Auld Scotland's sangs—her strains sae sweet,
 The lore in which he prided—
 Were nought to him but life in death,
 Or dew on flower that's faded.

Now, gentle hearts—ye weel may weep
 For him, the lost, despairing ;—
 Benighted in the light o' heaven,
 To death's dark vale repairing.
 O wha may judge the mind distraught,
 Where fearfu' thoughts engender ?
 O wha may judge the reckless hands,
 That soul and body sinder ?

They missed him in his father's ha'—
 That night o' meikle sorrow ;
 And in the haunts o' busy men
 They missed him on the morrow.
 Bewail thy son, thou lightsome town ;
 Bewail, thou lonesome river ;
 The leal, kind heart is cauld and still—
 The Bard is gane for ever.

They sought him in the greenwood glade,
 Where the pine's dark shadow gloometh ;
 They peered in clefts and darksome dells
 That the noontide ne'er illumeth ;
 They dragged the deep and drumly pools
 Wi' meikle care and labour ;
 By Marykirk, by Craigie haughs,
 And the green howes o' Kinnaber.

They called his name, frae bank to brae,
 The lonely rocks replying ;
 The sad sea moaning on the shore,
 And dark woods deeply sighing :
 And when they scared the birds o' prey
 The death watch o'er him keeping,
 Through a' Kinnaber's howes, sae green,
 Uprose the voice o' weeping.

O wae betide thy haste to wed ;
 Fause love, couldst thou not tarry
 Until the bending reed wad break,
 Ere a new love thou wouldest marry.
 Hadst thou a heart within thy breast ?
 Could there be no delaying ?
 O couldst thou speed the sand o' life,
 Nae gentle ruth betraying ?

But, ah ! the sting o' late remorse,
 The wound that never healeth !
 The pang that rends the guilefu' breast,
 The pride o' beauty paleth !
 O never mair in festive ha'
 She joined the mirthfu' measure,
 And never mair in lonesome bower
 She wore the smile o' pleasure.

NOTE.

The sad story of this ballad is well known in Forfarshire. To strangers it will be of little interest. It has been detailed circumstantially in a late publication ; in short, it has had as much publicity as tongues and types could give it, so there need be less delicacy now in treating of the subject. For all that, I am unwilling to be more explicit, lest, perhaps, some living relatives might feel hurt by having the matter again dragged into public notice. Young readers who may have any curiosity to know more about it will not require to ask many questions on the subject when they will be satisfied,

THE MINISTER'S SON.

(From 'Mrs Macandle's Note-Book.')

CHAPTER FIRST.

Ir was in the year twenty-sax, the year o' the short corn, and after hairst—for it was near the end o' October—on a Saturday night, that a chaise halted at our door. The bairns were in their beds, and my sister Nelly and me were sittin' sewin' by the fire. My gudeman was out, and there was naebody to hand the horses, so the driver held the reins in his hand as he stood at the door. I tauld him, in answer to his question—‘Does Mrs Macandle live here?’—that she did, and that I was the person he inquired for. Then he said—

‘ You are wanted by a lady who is ill, and I am here with a chaise at your service. Pray, make what haste you can, and come with me. Your compliance will be properly considered, I was desired to tell you. Here is a line that will perhaps let you up to something of the case.’

I took the line to the fireside, and read it by the light o' the cruisie, for we had nae gas then. I wasna muckle the wiser, but it led me to surmize that there was nae time to lose, and that there had been little preparation for an event that it appeared had been unexpectit.

‘ But where am I to gae? and wha's wantin' me? I inquired.

‘ Make haste, make haste,’ he cried, ‘ and I'll answer your questions as we go along.’

As I never refused my services in ony case o' the kind, I was soon ready to go, and the driver handit me into the chaise, on which I could just get a glimpse o' the name ‘Waddel,’ so I kenn'd it was a hired ane. He mountit the box, and awa' we went at a great pace down the street, and out the Hill road. I began to think to mysel' that I had come awa' in a daft-like way, as I didna ken wha wanted my assistance, where I was gaun, or indeed onything about it, but just that I was wanted by a woman that the coachman ca'd a ‘lady,’ and wha I judged to be lying-in. I cried out to him twa or three times, ‘ Whaur are we gaun? What's the name o' the foun? but he either didna hear me, or didna want to hear, for he made nae answer. Weel, there was naething to be kenn'd about the matter till we

arrived at the place, it seemed, so I rowed mysel' in my plaid, for it was a cauld nicht, and leaned back in my seat in as comfortable a way as I could. But it was a rough, jolting' ride, for the Hill road was nae turnpike, but just led to farms here and there up the country. I thought twa or three times that the chaise wad hae coupit a'thegither, and cried out to the man to drive slower, but he never let on that he heard me ; as little did he heed when I speir'd if we were near the place. I wasna very easy in my mind at being treated in this way, but had to sit wi' patience—sic patience as I could command—till we should reach our journey's end. Yet I couldna resign mysel' to my situation, but keepit lookin' out at the carriage windows, now on ae side and now on the ither. It was dark, and the road was strange to me, for ony houses that we passed I couldna think I had ever seen them before ; and as strange to me were the dusky trees and hedges we were fleein' past, I couldna help feelin' a little eerie, though sensible that my fears were foolish ; for wha would tak a' this trouble to bring a puir body like me a' this way awa' frae hame for ony evil purpose ? If there was ony ill meant it wasna to me, but to some puir creature whose trouble was to be hid frae the warld, and whose livin' burden was maybe never to see the light o' day. While sic fearfu' thoughts were risin' in my mind and chillin' my blood, the chaise turned up a lane bordered sae thickly wi' trees that the sky, wi' its dim stars, was veiled out o' sight a'thegither, and, after proceedin' a mile or mair in total darkness, it halted. I now heard a man speaking in low tones to the driver, and, lookin' out on the side the voice seemed to come frae, by the light o' a lantern that the man carried, I could see a wooden gate, and an auld-fashioned house of twa storeys amang trees and shrubbery. The coachman helpit me out, and before I could speir where I was, he was awa' leading his horses round by the back o' the house, wi' the lantern in his hand. Left in the dark, the stranger took hold o' my arm, and sayin' 'This way, if you please,' led me through the gate and alang a gravel path up to the house door. It was open, and a woman stood in the lobby wi' a candle in her hand. My guide said to me, in low tones—

' This woman will attend to you, Mrs Macaulde.'

In another moment the front door was shut, and I followed the woman into the parlour. It was a dreary-lookin' room. The wa's were wainscotted wi' dark wood—oak, I think. The ceiling was low, and had ance been white, but was now sadly smokit. There was a gude fire in the rusty grate, and a kettle on the hob. The woman—she might be forty year auld, or thereabout—set down the candlestick on the table, that was covered wi' a white table-cloth, and said—

'Come this way, and tak' aff your things.'

She showed me into a bedroom, back from the parlour.

I asked her where I was, and what was the name of the master o' the house?

She replied—'I am as ignorant of all that as you are. I was engaged as nurse, and was brought here yesterday, as you have been to-night.'

'But you ken wha engaged you?'

'No,' she replied. 'I was sent for to an Inn in Edinburgh, and engaged by a stranger.'

'I dinna like this mystery,' I said.

'Neither do I,' she replied; 'but I'm to be well paid, and so will you. Then keep yourself easy, and off with your things, take a cup of tea, and I'll show you upstairs.'

'Is it a young woman that's—'

'Yes, yes; you can guess as well as me. She doesna wear a ring on the right finger, but she must be attended to for all that.'

This was evidently a sensible woman, and ken'd what she was about, though she might not be over-scrupulous. When I came into the parlour again, she had a cup of tea poured out for me, and a glass of wine on a servit. I thanked her, and drank the tea, asking for my patient in the meantime. She said I would judge of her state presently, and rose to show me the way upstairs—the staircase, I observed, had great oak bannisters. Motioning me to remain on the landing, she entered a room. In a few minutes she returned, and conducted me in. I am particular in mentioning a' the circumstances, because they are so deeply impressed on my mind. It was a large bedroom to the front, above the parlour, with a four-posted bedstead opposite the fire, and heavy moreen curtains that had ance been red. The wa's were covered wi' a dingy, tawny-co'oured paper that was torn aff in some places. There was a fire in the grate and a light on the table, but for a' that, the room had a ghostly appearance. On the bed was lyin' a puir young creature scarcely out o' her teens, and my heart was touched wi' pity when I first lookit upon her, for I was sure she wantit the greatest comfort a woman can hae in her situation. It's weel expressed in 'Douglas Tragedy'

'She for a loving husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a son was born.'

The puir thing was very ill, but to my surprise she bore a son before morning. The woman that introduced me was evidently an experienced nurse, and I felt the less reluctance to leave my patient and the infant, as they were in careful and experienced hands. I had nae choice, however, for I called out o' the room before daylight, and met on the ~~the~~ the man that took me into the house. He asked for

the mother and child, thanked me for my services, thrust a pound-note into my hand, and told me there was no further occasion to detain me, as the person in charge was a competent nurse. I remonstrated against such a sudden departure, my patient being so weak, and, besides, there was nae haste to leave before daylight. I tauld him plainly that I didna like baith comin' and leavin' under cloud o' night, for it did not look well. He said—

‘The chaise is at the gate, refreshments are on the table, your money is in your hands; what want you more? Your patient is as well as can be expected, with proper attendance; you have, therefore, nothing more to do here, unless you want to spy into other people's affairs. Go downstairs and make ready. I will give you (lookin' at his watch) half an hour, and no more.’

I had never been treated in sic a manner before, and was very ill pleased, so I said the service was nae o' my seekin', and as for spyan' into ither fouk's affairs, I was as free o' that as ony woman, but I had a woman's insight and a woman's feelings, and feared something like foul play in this business. I warned him that I wad be nae party in ony matter that wadna bear the light, and that I considered it my duty to mak' inquiries.

‘And why, madam?’ he asked, haughtily.

‘Your ain conscience will tell you,’ I answered, ‘if you hae nae cause to fear inquiry into this night's wark.’

‘You are impertinent,’ he said.

‘It may be,’ I replied; ‘but why did you no get a doctor instead o' a puir woman, to harass and agitate her in this way?’

‘I had my own reasons,’ he replied. ‘Economy was not one, as you may see. Come, Mrs Macauld, be reasonable. If you have been put about a little, you have not been shabbily treated. I expect you to be ready to go in half an hour, remember.’

I returned to the room and looked at the nurse, but she gave no sign of intelligence. I then went to the bedside, and, taking the young mother by the hand, bade her take care o' hersel' for the sake o' her young son, and she wad soon be well again. I didna like to distress her by saying good-bye so soon. I asked the nurse in a whisper if she knew any reason for this enforced departure, but she only shook her head. Being too disturbed in mind to take the refreshment she offered me, I went downstairs directly. The man who had dismissed me with so little ceremony was standing in the parlour, with his back to the fire. He had a great-coat on, and a muffler round his neck that covered his chin, and his hat was on his head. I wasna a bit surprised to see him happit up that way in the house. He wantit to see me aye, and he didna want me to recognise him, in case I

should see him again. He signed to me to take the lamp and make ready. I took it up without a word, and went into the room where I had left my bonnet and plaid. When I returned to the parlour I held the light so as to get a better view o' his face, but he turned aside and said, sharply—

‘Are you ready?’

‘Yea,’ I replied. ‘Are you ready to declare that a’ is here as it should be?’

‘I am not accustomed,’ he said, ‘to be catechised by such as you. Come.’

As he led the way to the door, it struck me forcibly that he was a clergyman. I was dumfounded with the thought, and couldna speak a word till he offered to assist me into the chaise, which was at the gate. Declining his assistance, I sprang in, for I was active then, and said to him—

‘You are a minister of the Gospel, and have great responsibility on your soul.’

He started back till he struck against the gate. At that moment the driver lashed his horses, and off they started at a great rate down the lane. The speed was even greater when we got upon the broader road, and was kept up a’ the way to the town. It was a dark mornin’, but as my een became used to the darkness, I took note o’ ilka house and group o’ trees, and ilka turn o’ the road, as weel as the dim light and quick motion permitted. When within about three miles o’ the town, I became aware where I was. Twa roads join there; ane leads to the Milton, and the ither—alang which I had been taken—leads, as I said, to nae place in particular, but just branches out across the country. I judged that my journey wad be eight or nine miles awa’ at least, and determined to question the coachman when we arrived. When the chaise haitit at our door, the man helpit me out civilly, and I said—

‘Now, if you are a man, tell me whare I have been this night?’

He laughed, and replied—

‘Tut, tut, Mrs Macaulie, this chaise was hired by special bargain, and so was I for that matter. One of my articles of agreement was to answer no questions. All’s right, I understand. You are paid for your service, and so am I, and that’s all we have got to do with the business.’

I said—‘The hirin’ o’ man and beast is naething to be compared to the ruin o’ a fellow-creature, and it may be the loss o’ human life.’

By this time he had mountit the box, and he cried—

‘Nonsense, Mrs Macaulie. There’s been no harm done, but good. Go to bed and get a sound sleep. Good morning.

He turned the horses' heads, and drove awa' on the road to Edinburgh.

I could learn but little mair about that mysterious night's business. A' that my cautious inquiries brought to light was that I had been to the auld house o' Grange. If I waana there it was hard to say where I was. The house o' Grange belonged to the laird o' Langlands, wha seldom saw it, I believe. It had been allowed to get maistly ruinous since the auld lady died. Some English foul had occupied it as summer lodgings before my adventure, but they had left it sometime. I heard nae English tongue that night ony way, nor could I hear that ony ither parties occupied the auld house after the English family. If it was there that I was that night, it was evident that my patient had been brought there quietly, and as quietly removed in a few days—as soon, indeed, and maybe sooner than she was able to bear the fatigue o' a journey. Since that time, I understand, the house has been inhabited by farm-servants. In the course of time other matters put the circumstance out of my mind, and it was only when reference was made to onything that recalled it, that the mysterious business o' that night rose up afresh in my remembrance.

CHAPTER SECOND.

In the year thirty-one, when Mitherton as weel as ither towns was agitated about the Reform Bill, I was lyin' ill o' a slow fever, brought on by cauld and exposure. There were great rejoicings when that Bill passed at the lang length and became the law o' the land. Our town's foul held a sort o' jubilee on the occasion, and I mind o' hearin' the procession marchin' past our house, and Nelly tellin' me a' about the flags as they passed. When I was able to gang about again the doctor advised me to gang to the country twa or three weeks for change o' air. I gaed to Seacraig, where my gudeman's sister lived then, and got a drive out there in the postman's gig. My health improved greatly, and I soon began to experience again the pleasure o' being hungry. Puir healthy foul, wi' little to eat, wad be surprised at sic an expression, and sae wad young foul that never kent what it is to want an appetite. But I can assure them there's little pleasure in havin' plenty o' a' things when ane can tak' naething. Hunger is the best sauce. A plate o' porridge is far sweeter to a hungry herd laddie than the wing o' a chicken to a miserable invalid, wha has neither appetite nor digestion. I stayed three weeks at Seacraig, and pleasant weeks they were, for I was conscious o' gettin' better and stronger day by day. The second Sunday I gaed

to the kirk o' Sandiholes, mair than a mile distant, wi' my gude-sister, though she wasna willin' that I should venture to gang sae far. I was tired enough, and glad to rest mysel' in the seat when we reached the kirk. When the minister gaed up to the pulpit I thought I had seen him before some way. When he gave out the psalm his voice soundit in my ear as if I had heard it before. When he began his sermon the same idea haunted me, and took aff my attention in great measure from the subject, which was on the keepin' o' the Sabbath. His text was in Nehemiah xiii. 15, and when I could turn my thoughts to the subject I was like to think mysel' in a Jewish synagogue instead o' a Christian church. But aye now and again my attention fell aff from the discourse and became fixed upon the preacher. 'Twas of no use perplexing my mind with conjectures where I had seen him before, for the man was evidently a stranger to me, and I was vexed at mysel' for bein' sae possessed wi' an idea that I must have seen and heard him before. When on our way hame I spaired at my gude-sister if Mr Knox had been lang at Sandiholes, and what kind o' a man he was. She said—

'He has been there about seven years. He is a gude enough preacher, but a hard sort o' a man. He has been finding faut wi' some o' the farmers for leadin' on Sunday, and I suppose he has been preachin' *at them* in the forenoon.'

'Weel,' I rejoined, 'he seems to me to be mair like a Jewish Rabbi than a Christian minister. Do you ken if ever he preached in Mitherton?'

She replied—'I never heard o' him preachin' thare, but maybe he has been for a' that.'

So I had to conclude that I was something light-minded yet after my illness. A' through the afternoon and evening I was sadly puzzled thinkin' o' that Sabbatarian preacher, and could think o' naething else. When in my bed the same idea haunit me, and I couldna sleep. After lyin' wauken for hours vexed at mysel' for bein' so foolish, I was just doverin' ower asleep when a' in a moment I was in the auld house o' Grange, and there in the gloomy parlour, standin' wi' his back to the fire, wi' greatcoat and hat on, and muffler round his neck, was the Reverend Mr Knox, the minister o' Sandiholes. I was frightened by this unaccountable vision, for I was now at least wide awake, and kenn'd that I was in my bed at Seacraig. It did not strike me as any supernatural revelation, but as a miraculous discovery of something I had lost. How or whence came this discovery now? I questioned mysel', tried to reason on the matter. Reason would have nothing to do with it. Still the impression remained, and in spite of reason I was convinced it was true. All my objections were borne down by an unreasonable and unaccountable conviction. I just

jumped to the conclusion that the father o' the bairn that was born five years before in the auld house o' Grange was the Reverend Mr Knox, the minister o' Sandiholes. Here was a ravelled hasp redd up wi' a vengeance. But wha was to take my reddin' up for gospel truth? Nae doubt I wad be accountit mad if I spoke to onybody o' sic a notion, so I resolved to say naething about it—no even to my gudeman, wha wad have first laughed at me and then lectured me about idiotic absurdity, and defamation o' character, the sacred calling o' the ministry, and so forth. I did, however, put some sly questions next day to my gude-sister.

‘Has your minister ony family, Janet?’

‘Family!’ she exclaimed. ‘Bless you, he’s no married yet.’

‘I should have first speired if he had a wife; but he might have a son, though he hasna a wife. Ye ken sic things are ower common.’

‘Very true,’ she replied, but, in a whisper, ‘did you ever hear onything o’ the kind charged against our minister?’

‘I never heard ony particular charge; but, Janet, lass, did you never hear ony whispered rumour o’ disreputable connections regardin’ Mr Knox and a young woman?’

‘I canna deny but I have,’ she said, hesitating; ‘but you ken there are mony false reports o’ that sort, and I’m no just willin’ to believe a’ that’s been whispered about him and her, and wadna tak’ it upon me to spread sic reports.’

‘You are very right in that,’ I replied, ‘and I think muckle e’ you for your charitable way o’ dealin’ wi’ the man’s character; but there’s a proverb that says, “There’s aye some water whaur the stirkie drowns”—that’s to say, reports o’ that kind are seldom raised without some foundation. You spak’ o’ him and her—wha is she?’

‘Weel, I’ll tell you a’ I ken about it. When Mr Knox came to Sandiholes, he came to be helper to auld Mr Greig. There was plenty o’ room in the manse, but ministers dinna care for lodgers, especially o’ their ain kind.’

‘You may say that, Janet,’ I remarked; ‘twa queen bees wad as soon agree in ae hive as twa ministers in ae house.’

‘Weel, that may be true; but, howsoever, Mr Knox lodged wi’ Mrs Mudie, a farmer’s widow that has a house up i’ the Bents. Her twa dochters were nae married then, and they a’ lived thegither. Her son gaed awa’ to Australia shortly before, and the minister got his room. He stayed there about twa years, and in that time the auldest lassie was married to John Millar, the wright o’ Seacraig. Weel, Mrs Mudie, the auld fule bodie, gaed awa’ and stayed twa or three weeks wi’ her married dochter, and left Kate—a young daft jade—alane i’ the house wi’ the minister. It was a very improper thing o’ ony mither to do, and a’ the

neebours spak' about it ; indeed, the minister himsel' should have objeckit, but fouk said he had his ain reasons for sayin' naething against it. At onyrate, it was then that scandalous reports began to be whispered about him and Kate. It might have been because they were left in the house themsel's that the reports were raised ; but there was a circumstance that seemed to confirm them. About sax months after that she gaed awa' to visit her grandfather in the Carse o' Stirling, and, instead o' bidin' a week or twa, it was said she stayed twa months, and syne left in a great hurry to come hame ; but she has never come hame to this day, and it is now about five years sin' that time. When anybody spaired at her mither where she was, she said she was in service in Edinburgh. The auld woman aye keeps her house, but she bides chiefly wi' her married dochter, Mrs Millar, here, at Seacraig. I should hae mentioned that auld Mr Greig died, and Mr Knox gaed to live in the manse before Kate Mudie gaed awa' frae hame. He has never married, as I tauld you. Fouk say that he never gaes to see his auld landlady, Mrs Mudie. Kate was at ae time a nurse in the Edinburgh Infirmary, for Jock Bell, the cadger, was in wi' a broken leg, and saw her there. I've heard since that she was married wi' a drucken shoemaker chiel' about Edinburgh, but canna speak to the truth o't. Now, that's a' that I ken about the matter. It does look something queer, but yet a' that I've tauld you doesna amount to proof that there was ony evil connection between the lass and the minister.'

'Weel,' I replied, 'it may na be direct evidence, but it's something like circumstantial. Mony a man has been hanged wi' less proof. But, Janet, lass, think you your minister innocent if you can, for it's the maist pleasant way o' thinkin'. But I canna think sae. I tell you plainly I dinna like the man. He has most likely been the cause o' that young woman's ruin. It was a mercy the poor creature didna tak' to the streets. Nae thanks are due to him for that, I'm thinkin'. But if she's been a nurse in Edinburgh Infirmary, and got married to a drucken man for a hame o' ony kind, depend upon't she has fa'en low enough, considering that she was brought up respectably. It's likely she will tak' to the drink as weel as her man. The maist o' the Infirmary nurses can tak' a dram. I've seen something o' them mysel' when I was in Edinburgh.'

'My certie !' exclaimed Janet, 'but you are a witch for guessin', for I have heard that she was something gi'en to drink.'

'Ay, ay, when a woman loses character and respect—her ain respect and the respect o' the warl'—loses a' hope o' a life o' love and happiness—what will the puir wretch do but gang frae bad to worse ? It's mostly aye the case.

Muckle has the man to account for wha is the cause o' a' that. Sic a man, I fear, is your minister, Janet. What was to hinder him from marrying the lassie? She was ance as guid as him. I wad suppose; indeed, she may yet be as good as him—and better—for she doesna wear a life-lang lasting cloak o' hypocrisy.'

'There has been rumours now and then o' him getting ane o' the Miss Hasties o' the Milton,' said Janet.

'Ou ay,' I replied, 'he'll get married nae doubt, and when his wife brings him a son, she'll lie in a cosy room o' the manse, instead o' a dreary auld dungeon house, damp and mouldy as a cave. She'll see kind and anxious friends round her bed, instead o' cauld, indifferent hirelings that she never saw before. The bairn will be welcomed and fondled as an expected blessin', instead o' being looked on with vexation and aversion as a misbegotten wretch—a living witness, that may bring baith shame and danger, and that name will welcome into this weary wairld.'

'Wha are you speakin' o' now,' asked Janet.

'I'm speakin' o' an unwelcome guest, Janet, that has nae business to trouble fous for bed and board. What like a lass was that Kate Mudie?'

'She was tall and shapely, wi' blue een and reddish-brown hair; a good-lookin' lass, though naewise remarkable for beauty. But how are you speirin' about her sae particularly? Have you heard onything about Mr Knox and her in Mitherton?'

'You needna speir that, for if there be ony reports in the country, a bird o' the air will carry the matter to our town. In general false reports die afore they grow auld. This ane is no dead yet. If your minister marries Miss Hastie, the auld story will get a new lease o' life, you'll see. Weel, we maun leave time to try its vitality; that tries a'.'

The subject wasna mentioned again durin' the few days I stayed at Seacraig. I came hame better in health, and was soon in my auld usual way.

For a while I often thought of the minister o' Sandiholes, and my mysterious business at the Grange. I did at length mention my supposed discovery to my gudeman, but, as I expectit, he ca'd me a fule, and said I wad get mysel' in a scrape—that I wad be considered a dangerous character, and that respectable fous wad hae naething to do with me if I was to set mysel' to redd-up a' the mysterious matters o' town and country, and father bastard bairns on ministers, and inflame parishes and presbyteries wi' scandal. I'm nowise remarkable, mair than ither women, for keepin' a secret; but, to tell the truth, I was fleyed to speak about that matter, and sae it was better keepit than it might have been, on that account. By-and-bye it wore out o' mind, and it was years after my visit to Seacraig that it was

brought back to my remembrance in a most remarkable manner.

I mind it was in the year that the Queen first visited Scotland, and near the end o' the year, that I attended the gudewife o' Muirfield. There was a halfin lad that cam' for me in the auld gig. As we joggit on the road to Muirfield—for the canny cart-horse wad tak' the road easy, whether the wife was in a hurry or no—I put some questions to the lad.

‘Have you been lang at the Muirfield, laddie?’

‘About twa years,’ he replied.

‘And does your fousk bide thereabout?’

‘No,’ he said. ‘I have an aunty that bides at Seacraig, but I’m seldom there.’

‘And your father and mither—where do they bide, if they’re livin’?’

‘My mither bides in Edinburgh,’ he said, in a hesitating way.

‘You’ll think me very inquaitive,’ I said; ‘does your father no bide there?’

‘No,’ he replied shortly.

I was ashamed to question him more, bnt a strange curiosity had taken possession of me, and after a little I asked his mother’s name.

‘Katrine Mudie,’ he replied.

‘Bless me!’ I exclaimed, ‘does your grandmother live at Sandiholes?’

‘She did live there,’ he said, ‘but she’s dead.’

‘Excuse me, laddie, for I feel a strange interest in you now. Let me mind; you’ll be fourteen year auld past?’

‘Ay,’ he replied, ‘last October. How do you ken?’

‘I’ve gude cause to ken,’ I muttered. ‘Do you ken where you was born?’

‘Ay,’ he answered, ‘I’ve heard my mither say that I was born at the Grange. That’s a place about sax or seven miles wast frae this.’

‘Oh! weel do I mind o’ the place,’ I exclaimed, ‘and the dark October night you was born. Ay, my puir lad,’ and I took him by the hand, ‘I ken you now. I was the first that kenn’d you, for my arms were the first that held you when you cam’ to the world. I attendit your mither when you was born in the auld house o’ Grange.’

‘That’s extraordinar!’ he exclaimed; ‘and that you should ken me now. You’ll ken my father, then?’

‘I think I do. Do you ken him yourself?’

‘I ken him,’ he said; ‘but he disna ken me.’

‘No, laddie, but he may ken you yet, and hing down his head before you. He is not a good man. He betrayed the mither, and he has neglectit the son. He may screen his misdeeds frae the world, but he canna silence the whispers

o' conscience. Do you weel in the warld, my brave lad, and your guude conduct will heap coals o' fire upon his head.'

'I'll try,' he replied ; 'but I've nae schoolin', so I canna be onything but a ploughman.'

'A ploughman is an honourable occupation,' I rejoined. 'Robert Burns was a ploughman.'

'Ay,' he replied ; 'but wha has a genius like him ?'

'Nane, laddie, in this age, I believe ; but its conduct, and not genius, that wins respect. Conduct alane will gain the respect o' a' guid men. Genius alane will gain neither respect nor comfort, but will be a curse to its possessor. Mak' you guude use o' the talents you have, and that, never fear, will bring you a rich reward. Got you ony schoolin' ava ? Tell me a' about yoursel' and your mither. You winna blame me now for idle curiosity.'

'Na,' he said, 'you maun be interested about us, and have a right to ken a' that I can tell you. I dinna like to tell ilka body that my father and mither werena married, because I hae gotten it cast up to me that I was a bastard. But I've nae fear o' you.'

'Gude keep you, my poor lad ; whaeever does that is guilty o' a mean and cruel sin. The blame is no yours ; but your lot, I fear, has been to bear the brunt o' ither's blame. How does your mither live, and how are you and her sae far sundered ?'

'Weel you maun ken, my mither married John Paterson, a shoemaker in Edinburgh. He tak's awfu' balls o' drinkin', and I'm wae to say that my mither has learned to like drink too. My stepfather and my mither cam' frae Edinburgh to see my granny, and I was wi' them. That was about twa years syne. He got the waur o' drink, and my mither had been tastin' alang wi' him. My granny accused them baith o' drinkin', and o' bein' a disgrace to her, and wi' comin' to affront her afore the hale neebourhood. She accused my mither wi' bein' at the manse seekin' siller, ca'd her a shameless woman, and him a base, low fellow, no worth the name o' a man, that wad Guzzle and drink the hush money, as she ca'd it, o' his wife's shame.

'She said—'For a' the money you've gotten by beggin' letters, and shameless unwelcome visits, the puir laddie is neither fed, clad, nor schuled. He is neither meat-like, nor claih-like. You'll gae awa' back to Edinburgh baith o' you, and leave the bairn wi' me, and I'll try and mak' up for your neglect o' the puir lost creature. Gude forgie me, Kate, but I dinna wish to see your face again in this warld. I'll no hae lang to bide in't now, but I'll see to your bairn as lang's I live.'

'Poor granny began to greet, and sae did my mither and me, but John Paterson said—'What are you a' sneevlin' for ? You can keep the brat ; we'll be weel quit o' him.

He's name o' mine, and I have no occasion to be bothered with him. Come along, Kate; let's leave the youngster with the old woman. She won't have anything to do with you, at all events.'

'My mither was wae to pairt wi' me, though. She grippet me round the neck and sobbit right sair, and said to me—

'Bide wi' your granny, Willie. I'm wae to leave you, but it's for your gude. Gang to the schule and learn as fast as you can. You'll no hae lang o't, for you'll soon be fit for a trade, and grow up to be a good man. I'll be proud to hear o't though I should never see you again. I have not done my duty to you, my puir laddie, but be you a better man than your mother has been a woman.'

'She turned to gang, Paterson was outside callin' for her to mak' haste, but granny held out her hand and said—

'Good-bye, my puir Kate, and tak' as good counsel frae me as you hae gien to your ain bairn. I'll be glad to hear frae you when you are doin' weel.'

'I was wae to be left by my mither, but the fear o' my stafather—he was aye harsh to me—made me stay wi' my granny. She put me to the schule neist day. I was ashamed o' mysel', a big laddie like me to be put in the primer class wi' the bairns. The laddies o' my ain size made a mock o' me. I threatened to run awa' twa or thr ee times, but granny said—

'It's only for a week or twa, Willie, as lang as you're a stranger. Keep a stout heart and never heed them. I'll do my best to help you wi' your lessons at night, and you'll soon get forrit. Consider, if you dinna learn now, when you hae the opportunity, you'll be ashamed o' your ignorance when you grow up amang ither young men.'

'Weel, I did the best I could, and was getting quit o' the jeerin' about the muckle bairn in the primer, but a big laddie, twa or three year aulder than me, ca'd me a bastard ae night when we cam' oot o' the schule, and said Paterson wasna my right name. Weel, if that chap didna get a pakin' he kens himsel'. I had learned to fight in Edinburgh, if I had learned naething better, and was perfectly savage, hittin' aye on the same pairts, till his face was a fearsome sight to see. I got peace after that, and cam' on real weel at the schule. But I hadna been aboon a year at it when puir granny fell ill and died, after being confined to her bed about three weeks. She tauld my aunty to tak' me hame wi' her to Seacraig. I gaed wi' her, but the gude-man wasna willin' for me to be there—I could baith see and hear that. He said they had seven o' their ain, and it was hard to be burdened wi' ither fouks' bairns. I said to my aunty when he was out that I wad do onything if she wad only try and get a master for me. She said—

'I'm real sorry, Willie, that you shouldna get a while

langer at the schule, but you see the gudeman is nae very willin' for you to bide wi' us, and I'm sorry for that too, Willie, but a wife is no the maister o' the house, whatever fules may say. There's nae hurry for leavin' Seacraig, however, and I'll see what can be done.'

'I beggit her to lose nae time in lookin' for a place o' some kind, or else I wad gae and try to get some way for mysel'.'

'Whaur could you gang, or what could you do, laddie?' she said. 'You're rather young for a trade—just twal year auld.'

'I'm twal past October,' I remarkit.

'Weel, Willie,' said my aunty, 'that's only three weeks past. Wad you no like to gae hame to your mither in Edinburgh? It's a far better place for a laddie gettin' to a trade than Seacraig.'

'I wad gae hame to my mither,' I replied, 'if it werenae for my staffather. When there wasna enough siller sent to keep me he speak to me as if I had been a dog, and kickit me, too. Many a row my mither and him had about that afore I was left wi' granny. He wad be ten times waur now if I was gaun back, and besides my mither wadna hae a life ava wi' him. Na, na, I maun try something for a living. Surely I wad mak out to herd kye till I grow a bit bigger.'

'There's nae herdin' in winter, Willie,' she said; 'but now when I think o't, the gudewife o' Muirfield is a gude friend o' mine, and sae is the gudeman for that matter. They're dainty, kind fouk, and you wad be weel there. If they'll tak you at Martinmas, just to do ony orra wark—they'll no s'ress you ower sair—I wadna heed about ony wages for the winter half-year. I could manage to get you onything you wad need. What do you say to that, Willie?'

'I'm real willing,' I replied.

'Weel, then,' said my aunty, 'I'll stап yont to Muirfield the morn, and see about the matter.'

'And so she did, and I gaed to Muirfield the day after. I have been there ever syne. I took ill wi' the ways o' the place till I got acquaint. But they're real gude folk, baith maister and mistress. I dinna get ony wages, but I get my claes, and a shillin' now and then to buy ony little things. I bought a slate and paper, pens and ink, and Rob Proctor gi'ees me a lesson in the bothy in the e'enights. He is no very weel learned himself, but real willin' to help me as weel as he can. And now I have tauld you a' about mysel' that I mind o'. I'm gaun to be put on wages neist year, and buy my ain claes. I wad hae likit better to have learned a trade, but as you say, a ploughman is an honourable occupation.'

'So it is, laddie,' I replied; 'and so is ony handicraft. A' honest labour is honourable. I am greatly interested in the account o' yoursel' that you hae gien me. You ha—

had a hard beginnin', Willie, to fend for yoursel'; but you have shown that you have an independent spirit, and that's a grand thing to hae and to keep. Do you get leave to come in to the town sometimes?

'Ou ay,' he said; 'I can win awa' ony Saturday night or Sunday.'

'Weel, come to my house the first opportunity. I'll speak to my gudeman about you. I spak' to him about you langsyne; but I'll speak now in a different way, and I warrant he'll tak' an interest in your weelfare, for he has a kind heart, though he mak's nae fuss about it. But yonder's the house o' Muirfield; and Gude forgie us, for we hae forgotten the puir gudewife and her trouble a'thegither.'

I may mention here that I was in gude time at Muirfield, though we had a canny-goin' auld horse, and, sooth to say, we didna hurry him, bein' sae muckle taen up wi' our crack. A' gaed weel wi' the gudewife and her baby. It was a lassie, and muckle thocht o', as she had haen five sons, and this was the first daughter, come to make up the half-dozen o' a family.

CHAPTER THIRD.

I NEVER did onything better in my life than when I befriended Willie Paterson. He came to learn the joiner trade in Mitherton, and our house was a' the hame the laddie had durin' his apprenticeship. We keepit him in claes till he was able to provide for himself, and weel I wot there was never benefit conferred on a mare grateful creature. He was douce and thoughtfu' far beyond his age. I kenna if it was the thought of dependin' for assistance on founk that were nae kin to him that made him so anxious to improve the time when he was wi' us, baith in learning his business and in schoolin' himself in the evenings, but he did sae, and seemed to think of nae sport like ither laddies. I whiles thought he was ambitious o' risin' in the world, in spite o' the unpropitious way he had come into it, and the neglectful way he had been suffered to grow up sae lang. When I hinted at that he smiled, and said—

'I hope to do weel at ony rate. Thanks to my second mither. My first difficulties have been got the better o', and now it rests wi' mysel' to let you see that your guidness hasna been thrown awa'.'

Although a thoughtfu' laddie, as I said, he was cheerfu', and never dull in spirits but when his mither cam' to see him. His staffather never cam' wi' her after that time that Willie was left wi' his grandmither. But she cam', and cam' ower often, considering what was her chief errand.

The youngest had a great regard for his mither, and a curious sort o' sympathy was mixed wi' his regard, as if he pitied her for what she had come through, and for being tied to sic a man as John Paterson, though he was conscious that she did not deserve muckle better. The puir lad kenn'd ower weel that she had been at Sandiholes afore she cam' to see him, and she had aye the smell o' drink about her when she came. I ance overheard him sae to her—

‘Oh, mither, if you hae ony regard for me dinna gang to him seekin' siller. It's a shame and disgrace baith to you and me. You have nae claim upon him now, when I am saxteen year auld. Oh, if you would only gie up takin' drink. If it werena for the whisky, Paterson and you might live independent o' thae beggarly shifts. It's waur than beggarly, to demand siller wi' threatenin' to expose him. I ken ower weel how you get it. If it werena for his place, and for his wife and family, he would defy you and wadna gie you a penny. I believe he sends you siller to keep you frae comin' to Sandiholes, but it winna satisfy you. Oh, mither, if you dinna gie up this way o' doin' you'll make us the speak o' the whole country side. If you do, I'll no bide here, where they have been sae kind to me, but gae awa' where nae will ken me. Oh, if my time were only out !’

I kenn'd by his voice he was greetin'—indeed, the tears were rinnin' doon my ain cheeks. I heard his mither sobbin', and it was some time before she could speak. After a little she said—

‘You've gi'en me a sair heart, Willie, but you dinna ken what it is to be a woman ruined and cast awa'. I was cast awa' by him, and through him by my kindred and a' the wairld. It was a wonder I didna do waur, for I grew regardless o' mysel' and a' thethers but you. Ay, ill as I hae done a mither's part, it was chiefly for a hame to you that I married John Paterson, though a puir hame it turned out to be. But nae respectable man wad hae sought me, and, bad as he is, he is no ill to me on the whole. As you say, it's the drink that brings us into sic a miserable state as drives a' the little shame we hae left out o' us. But, Willie, wi' the help o' Heaven, I'll try and keep clear o't ; sae dinna vex yoursel' about me. You are a' the comfort I hae in this world, and it wad break my heart if you, too, should set your face against me.’

‘I'll never do that, mither, whatever happens ; but see and keep your word, and after my time is out I'll no see you want, sae hae patience, and mind dinna even taste whisky !’

‘There's my hand, Willie ; I'll tak' your advice.’

It was waesome to hear the young creature counselling his mither in sic a fashion. A drunken father is bad enough in a' conscience, but, oh ! pity the bairns that hae a drucken mither. Mrs Paterson did not come back for a lang ~~time~~

after this, but it wasna her I mind ye, but I never say that the great reason we are esteemed not as these whisky gave way as weel as before the force of intemperate habit. It seems that when Patterson and her y'g' a that same night, as she expressed in front of the shane that it wisna, he hame him self to Edinburgh to remect the person, as he call the shameless scoundrel a' that. And when she came it was only to be seen that her face was dusker, if she had any, were in the countey of the gowd-father. I wis the first Willie y'g' child, when he came hame to his father he lay and saw her smilin' in the house, for he grew wiser in the face. He was ne'erly an affectious man, though he made little demonstration o' kindness. He told me as Shakespeare says, 'wear his feelings on his sleeve for love to peck at.' But his feelings o' wisdom it warnt him when he saw her that, but for certain better reason, he had nae been smilin' to see. Fair fellow, I'm surt he thocht weel even at the wark that afternoon what his hands were doon. She left for Edinburgh next day, a'right, and evidently ashamed o' herself. It's a sair thing for a weel-bred young lad to be ashamed o' his mother. She a'feeling is enough t' trash a' the blithe life o' a young laddie. It's daurit t' write, and it canna be pleasant to read about it. It's a sad thing nevertheless ha' money a' aye has fause smilin', and we shoudna turn our eyes from a'nd wricht because it is nae pleasant to look up at. But our looks reflect o' bluidy things, a' such a sight. A single glance may suffice to make young folks who have good and exemplary natures profoundly thankful for the inestimable blessing they enjoy.

And here it's pleasant to turn to the subject o' guid writing that mak's a guid name, and t' gie an instance how that guid name may travel now, th' os. I dinnae unken'd to the possessor. It was about the beginnin' o' Willie's bairnsome year o' precociousness that he gat a letter frae his mither in Australia, wham he had never seen, and whop, he thought, kenn'd naeething aboot him. In this it appeared he was greatly mistaken, as the lett'r itself will show. It was directed to 'the cur' o' his master, so he gat it in the workshop; but he didna tak' time to read it till he cam' hame at even'. Here is a copy:—

“ My dear Nephew,—

“ You will no doubt be surprised by a letter from me, as you had no reason to think I kee' anything aboot you. But a good deal o' intelligence from the old country reaches us here on the other side o' the world. Your aunt at dea-ning wrote me after mother's death, and told me aboot you. She said they had nae accountation for you; but I could gather from her letter that my brother-in-law thought they

had plenty of youngsters of their own. She said she had got the Muirfield folks to take you into their service. I knew them, and was convinced they would not use you ill; so, on the whole, I thought perhaps it was better to get any bad training taken out of you among strangers, with whom you were to earn your living, than to stay with the Browns at Seacraig, where you would soon have felt you was not welcome, and most likely would have done no good. The next account I had of you was that you were learning the joiner trade in Mitherton. You have made friends for yourself somehow, which is a thriving sign. Lately a young man from your neighbourhood came out here, and called on me in Melbourne. He was intimate with the Muirfield folks, and he is related to your present master, so you must know him. His name is George Sinart, a son of the farmer of Milton. He gives you an excellent character, both as a farmer's boy and as an apprentice. It seems you have had the sense and perseverance to make up for your want of early schooling by improving yourself in the evenings. Sinart assures me that your master is well pleased with you, and that you will turn out a good hand at your trade. I am much gratified by hearing such good accounts of you, especially as that may enable me to be of service to you, which I should be glad to be on your poor mother's account, and for the sake of my own mother, who took much interest in you, and, indeed commended you to me in the last letter she ever wrote me. So now I have something to propose to you, which I wish you to take into serious consideration. I am an architect, as you must know, and am in partnership with a builder. We erect houses, both to order and on speculation. You have no home, at least with kinfolk. Now, were you to come out here after your apprenticeship, I could start you with the woodwork of a house, and supply material of course. From what I have heard of you, I should expect you to be competent to take charge. You would have to see that the work was done according to my specifications. As you would be inexperienced, you must be amenable to counsel, and not be too prejudiced in your home ways of working, but ready to change your hand according to circumstances. In short, you would have a charge over hands, but in reality you must consider me as your master to begin with. If you fall readily into my plan of operations, you will not find me a hard one. After mature deliberation, if you accept my proposal, write me, and I will provide passage, and likewise an assortment of tools, which you could bring with you. This outlay you would soon be able to repay, and then you would be in a position to save money for yourself. You will perceive that I don't mean to lay you under a great load of obligation. Experience has shown me that the best way to help a young man is to put him in

a way to help himself. I propose to put you in such a way, and if you answer my expectations, it may be for our mutual benefit. If you decline my proposal after due consideration, give me your reasons frankly, and I trust at all events we may remain good friends. You have had a hard pull in active life to commence with, but a man is all the better for that sometimes, if there is good stuff in him. Hold on as you have begun, and there is no doubt you will be a respectable man. The good folks you live with have been kind friends to you. I am sure you will never forget that. Assure them of my sincere thanks on your account. And now, my dear William, believe me, with all good wishes for your welfare, yours faithfully,

‘ROBERT MUDIE.’

O that beguilin’ letter! It gied me a sair heart when I heard Willie read it that night, for weel I kenn’d it wad be the mean o’ partin’ me and the bairn I had adopted, wha, now when my ain were married and awa’ frae me, had ta’en that place in my heart that a mither keeps for her youngest son. But I kenn’d he was glad, and wha could blame him? It was enough to bring tears o’ joy to his ean, puir lad, and he had to halt whiles as he read it. Was it not a joyfu’ surprise to him wha had been cast like a worthless weed on the stream o’ life, to find himsel’ kenn’d and cared for by an uncle he never saw, wha was stretchin’ a kindly hand to him frae the other side o’ the wairld! I tried to think on that, and to congratulate him on his good fortune; but my looks must have been true to my first thought, for he claspit my hand and said to me—‘Yon wadna bid your son, though you had but aye, refuse sic an offer, even if it came from a far-awa’ country. Steam-ships come and go every year, and there’s money to be made yonder to pay for passage. I have thought often of goin’ to America. You ken I have reasons for emigrating that other young men have not. But never think for a moment that I am unfeeling or ungrateful for a’ that. When I forget you, my second mither, it will be time I were done with the world, for my heart will then be cauld and dead. But you ken its natural for the young birds to leave their nest when they’re able to flee.’

‘Ay, Willie, but birds hae short memories, puir things, and their affection cools as their nursin’ cares grow less, and fades awa’ when there’s nae mair need for them. But a woman’s affections remain in her sad heart when her bairns are awa’ and the busy wairld has nae mair sympathy wi’ her than it has wi’ the thoughtless birds that forget their young amaist as soon as they flee.

‘I fear it’s ower true,’ he said, ‘but it’s the way o’ the world. There are few broods o’ our kind now-a-days that have not some birds of passage among them. But think o’ the pleasure o’ a letter in the well-known hand-writing.

The pen is a wonderful substitute for the tongue. Thanks to my guid friends, I can use it now. There's a Post Office in every town in the civilised world, and there's cheap postage to comfort absent friends. I ought to be a grateful fellow, for I find friends everywhere. There was that kind soul, George Snart, doing me a good turn away in Australia, and there is my uncle that—God forgie me, I scarcely ever thought of—caring for me kindly, and smoothing for me the way to comfortable independence. Yes, I ought to be a grateful fellow. He says in his letter that I am to take his proposel into serious consideration. Well, we'll take it to avizendum, as they say in law, but I feel something in my mind like a foregone conclusion.'

'Ay, laddie, men and women feel differently on the su'ject o' emigration. Nae doubt it is natural that they should. I ken it's selfish in us to wish our bairns to bide at hame where they maun work hard for a bare living, while comfort and independence are within their reach in a far-awa' land o' promise. But, oh the sad presentiment that fills the heart! It's weel expressed in the auld sang:—

"O meikle my heart forbodes to me
I never may meet you mair."

A dozen o' years will soon wear awa', and if you are spared you'll still be a young man; but if I be livin' then, I'll ha'e reached the threescore-and-ten, when earthly hopes will nae mair cheer my auld heart. A woman o' my age may be alloooed a little repinin' at pairtin' wi' them that she has little hope o' ever meeting mair in this warld; but we maun a' submit to the inevitable, and I do think that women submit to that at last mair humbly than men. Sae dinna let onything I may say influence your decision, whatever it may be. There are twa things a young man should decide on for himself—the land he's to live in, and the woman he's to live wi'. But decide not rashly, Willie, either in the case o' the land or the wife.'

'It's no likely,' he replied, 'that I'll be rash in the marrying way for a lang while to come. Lassies looking for men care little for prentice laddies. If ever I get a wife you are sure to ken o' the comin' event beforehand.'

'I'm nae sure about a' that, Willie. It has been the case before now that a' prentice laddie o' aughteen has been the idol o' a lassie's e'e. As for kennin' o' your marriage beforehand, if you gang to Australia and get a wife there the honeymoon will be run out lang ere I will ken o' the beginnin' o't. Nane can say, laddie, how they will do in sic a case till their time comes.'

There was little mair said that night, but mony a thought we had, nae doubt.

卷之三

... when we were yet amanins
... and we wad think it was a
... place to be in the house. The guideman
... wad be there a week or two. Willie
... wad entertain me easily for a time
... Mrs Christie, wha wad mak
... be keep she could. Sae I gaed
... to Seacraig. Sister Janet and me
... are mither since the branch railway
... to Seacraig is no far frae her door, and
... we are now within half-an-hour's travel.
... I wad go to Seacraig, for her man had
... the Gairns were up and awa'. The
... wad the frae hame, however, bein' a
... Sandholes. I made out to gae to
... would Sunday, and was struck wi' the
... appearance of Mr Knox, the minister.
... a dozen years since he lookit a young man;
... in white's the skaw, and his face was
... at the wrinkles of age or care. His manner,
... like his appearance. The stern sort o'
... gravity dissolved seemed to have left him

"James," I said, as we left the kirk, "your
a' man now, grown an' guid man."

"Aye, aye," he replied, "since you saw him last, for
he has been at Seaferry often of late years, you
and him to the kirk o' Sancteless. It doesna seem to me
a' man's chance. Mind you, he wasna very young
when he cam here, twenty years bygane. He wad then be
nae to forty, I suppose, though he didna look like it;
he now be camna be far frae threescore."

I should think he had been one auld,' I said; 'but he was aboot appearance now o' threescore and ten. And his manners is as changed as his looks: he is lis'less and tame compared to what he was when I last heard him.'

"I see the remark the change in his manner o' manners," she replied; "but I suppose it's a natural consequence of us all that we grow douce as we grow auld."

"That's very true, Janet; but there's a careworn look about you that shouldn't belong to a hale auld man o' three-score. Be happy in his domestic concerns! What sort of a man is Mr. Keane?"

now to speak if she wears the breeks? You are
surely, and I daursey Sandy Macaulde has

enough ado to keep you in your ain side o' the house. Weel, I kenna what sort o' a wife she is; but she is a hard mistress, I believe. She has ower mony changes o' servants. Our Mary doesna like her very weel, I ken.'

'I maun hae a sight o' Mary before I gae hame. Does she get leave to come and see you now and then?'

'She very seldom gets down to Seacraig, unless she is sent on an errand.'

'That will never do, Janet. This hard mistress o' the manse winna gie her servants a chance to get 'wooded an' married an' a'. I maun look out for a place for Mary where she will hae mair freedom; but a guid place is no easily got about a little town. A single servant about a sma' hoose where there's a family is a miserable drudge, wi' a mistress for ever lookin' o'er her. And the would-be gentry that get big houses gar twa servants do the wark o' three or four. Their maids maun be slaves, that thae wretched imitators o' the great may keep up their sham dignity. Puir pride will stoop to do the meanest and the cruellest things to maintain the show, rather than come aff its stilts and walk on honest legs. Whaever serves under it kens something o' petty tyranny. Though I'm a woman that says', that same petty tyranny is mair exercised by women than men; I wad far rather serve a master than a mistress. If the man had an ill temper, he wadna come doun to the kitchen to gie it vent; but the woman might do the amiable in the drawing-room, drawling out loves and dears and darlings, and when wearied of acting the angel upstairs, she might come doun and play the deevil in the lower regions, where the puir servant lassies maun hear and bear in silence. I dinna mean to say that there are nae guid misses; but they're no very rife. You may ken them by their servants being laith to leave them. But I see your house now, Janet. There's nae reek risin' frae the lunn, but if we were in at the door we'll soon hae the fire blaz'n and the kettle on.'

'Little doot o' tha', for we a' like our cup o' tea here in the country as weel as the fous in the toun. You see we seldom mak' dinner on Sunday, so we tak' our tea early in the afternoon. It's no that we hae ony scruples in regard to cooking on Sunday; it is just a custom bred o' laziness or indifference. If the Scotch were to eat dinners like the English on Sundays, their ministers might give up afternoon preaching a'thegither, for they would hae sleepy congregations.'

I assented to Janet's remarks as we entered the house, and little more was said at that time, as we were soon engaged in preparing our tea-dinner.

The week wore on—the last week I was to stay at Seacraig—and I was beginning to think that I wad hae to

leave without seeing my niece, Mary Mill ; and, somehow, I was m're anxious to see her than I had been on former occasions. I could not think of calling at the manse, as I suspected Mr Knox would know me if he were to see me, and would misjudge my motive for being there. I had also an idea—right or wrong—that he knew, either through Mrs Paterson or otherwise, that Willie had found a home with me. I had made up my mind to leave on Saturday, when, as luck would have it, in came Mary on Friday evenin'. She had been at the Post Office, and was on her way home to the manse, and, having heard that I was wi her mother, had made a' the haste she could, in order to hae some time for a crack wi' us. She didna see us at the kirk, as it wasna her forenoon out, but her neebour servant tauld her that there was a stranger wi' her mither in the seat, and from her description Mary guessed it was Aunty Macaulde.

After the usual freendly inquiries, I asked her how she liked her place.

‘No very weel,’ she said. ‘My neebour and me are baith tired o't. We couldna g't out to see our lads, though we had them waitin’; and as for ony o’ them comin’ into the manse kitchen, they wad as soon think o’ gaun into the minister’s pu’pit.’

‘Bless me, Mary, he maun be a hard master.’

‘Na, it’s no him, but the mistress that’s sae ill to do wi’. The twa misses gie a deal o’ trouble, but I could put up wi’ them a’ but the mistress. If you had seen her ae day last week you wad hae thocht she was possesst o’ a deevil.’

‘What did you do to anger her last week, Mary?’

‘It wasna me nor my neebour, but a strange woman that cam’ to the manse, and maistly put her mad. The stranger demanded to see the minister, and I put her into the back room, and tauld him there was a woman waitin’ there that wantit to see him. He came down to her, and after a little we could hear her speakin’ loud and angry like. We listened, and then we heard the minister speaking low, and seemingly tryin’ to pacify her. But she wadna be pacified, and I whispered to Lizzie—

‘That woman is either drunk or mad.’

‘But waur was to come. We heard her ca’ the minister a perjured villain twa or three times, and then she cried—

‘No, I winna be quiet. I dinna care wha hears me.’

‘Then down comes the mistress—she had been on the stair a’ the time—and Miss Ellen after her, and in they baith rushed into the room. We heard the mistress demand of the minister what that drunken vagabond woman was to him, and why he did not send for the police to take her in custody.

‘Drucken vagabond !’ screamed the strange woman. ‘If

I am sae, wha made me a drucken vagabond? I should have been in your place, madam, if that traitor hadn'a perjured his soul, and made me waur than a vagabond.'

'Base strumpet, out of this house!' shrieked the mistress. 'Put her out instantly. Am I to be insulted in my own house?'

Then we heard Miss Ellen say—

'Be quiet, mamma. Don't let such a person as that make you forget yourself.'

And then the minister cried, 'Go!' and we heard a scuffle, and the door flew open, and out he came holding the woman by the arm, and through the lobby, and pushed her out at the front door; she crying all the time—

'Villain! hypocrite! I'll take the gown aff your back. I'll let the public ken what you are.'

'We heard the mistress sobbin', but Ellen came and shut the kitchen door. At the same time we heard a smash o' broken glass, and the woman cried out something at the parlour window, but we couldn'a make out what it was. It was lang after tea time afore the bell rang, and we didna see the mistress again that night; but Miss Ellen came into the kitchen, and said her mamma was not very well—she had been frightened by a mad, drunken woman, and that we should be careful not to admit drunken people into the house. What think you o' a' that, auntie? Wasna that a bonnie row in the minister's house?'

'It takes awa' my breath, lassie. Heard you nae mair about the woman?'

'Oh, I forgot the end o't. How it came to pass I canna say, for none o' our folks sought the police; but sure enough the woman was ta'en up. John, the minister's man, says the constable heard the smashin' o' the window. At ony-rate he came to the manse that afternoon, and the minister and him gaed awa' thegither. But the business had been hushed up some way or other, for the woman was let aff, and we have heard nae mair about the matter.'

Mary now bade us a hasty guid night, saying she would be ill-heard for bidin' sae lang; and I was left in a very anxious state o' mind. It was a blessing that I never made a confidant o' my guid-sister in the matter o' the minister's son. I dinna claim ouny merit for keepin' it secret, for my guidman frightened me about the consequences o' raising scandal on the clergy, and afterwards I wadna for the wairld divulged it, on account o' Willie himself, puir chiel', for I kenu'd he was very sensitive on the matter o' his birth, and his mither's character. And I thought now, what if she has been to see him after this row, and what if she has affronted the puir laddie, and driven him to leave the town, and gang—as I heard him ance say he wad gang—where naebody wad ken him. I didna sleep a wink that night.

and hurried Janet, to her great surprise, wi' the breakfast next mornin'—though but little I took—that I might get awa' wi' the first train for Mitherton.

A' the time I was on the train my thoughts were divided between Willie and his unfortunate, erring parents. I pitied that minister now, who might moan out in bitterness of heart, 'Truly now, indeed, my sin hath found me out.' I pitied mair that wretched mother, who was now transformed into an avenging fiend, who had none of the Christian spirit of mercy or forgiveness, who had nothing of the woman left in her heart but a love for her offspring, which was no better than an animal instinct. As for the puir lad, it wad hae been a thousand times better for him had he been an orphan a'thegither.

When I reached home I learned, to my great surprise, that Mrs Paterson had not been there. Of course, I breathed not a word o' the matter but only to my guidman. I couldna help again and again expressing my surprise to him that she had not come to see Willie.

'I daresay,' he said, 'she had held to Seacraig, as the nearest port, and her folks there had been so scandalised that they had packit her off to Edinburgh instanter.'

And so it fortunately happened, as we afterwards learned ; and thus Willie was spared the pain then that wad have come with the knowledge of that crowning disgrace and exposure. John Brown, her brother-in-law, saw her to the station, took out her ticket, bundled her into a carriage, and stood till he saw the train fairly off, glad to be rid of her. Are there not some men and women born to be pests to a' their kith and kin ?

CHAPTER FIFTH.

WILLIE's apprenticeship was nearly out. He had written to his uncle in Melbourne, thankfully accepting his kindly offer, and was expecting a letter from him with every mail. Meanwhile there came a letter from another quarter that stunned him not a little. It was from his mother in Edinburgh, and it was sadly blotted with ink and tears. She told him that she and Paterson were about to sail for America. Their passage money was paid and their scanty luggage was on board. She entreated him to come out to New York when his time was out, and promised to send their address as soon as they got settled. She was wae, she said, to leave without seeing him, but Paterson would not let her come—indeed, there was no time, as the ship was to sail on Wednesday morning, and she was writing late on Monday night. They were to start early next morning for Greenock. She insisted that he had nothing to bind him to Scotland, and that America was the only country for a working man ; and ended by entreating him if he had any love for her to follow them out, bidding him goodbye in the meantime, with her dearest love. She made no mention of how the passage money had been raised, but we were at no loss to guess from what quarter it had come. Willie blamed his father more severely now than ever I had heard him do before.

‘The heartless, selfish man,’ he said, ‘has banished my poor mother. This cannot be called emigration ; and he has done this that he may live at ease and in security. How am I ever to find her out now if she should come to want ? I do not take her part for annoying him ; far otherwise, but what can I think of him for getting rid of the poor creature in such a way ? Is she not my mother ? Bah, it minds me of the unscrupulous times when living witnesses were quietly removed in accordance with the maxim, ‘Dead men tell no tales.’ Better for her had she been removed by death. I could almost find in my heart to curse him !’

‘Dinna curse him, Willie. Now hear me, and I’ll tell you how this has come about. I keepit it out o’ your kennin’ no to vex you, but some o’ your cousins will be sure to mention it when they see you, so you may as weel hear it frae me. Your mother was at Sandihole at the time I was at Seacraig. I didna see her mysel,’ but my niece, Mary Mill, that’s a servant at the manse, tauld me about the matter. A woman came and wanted to see the minister. She was shown into a room, where he came to her, and by-and-bye loud words were spoken that reached

ither ears than those they were meant for ; in short, there was an exposure before wife and daughter, and you see this emigration scheme hasn't been lang o' comin' out after it. Your mother had gone to her sister in Seacraig. Her sister's gudeman saw her on the train for Edinburgh that afternoon, and that was the reason we didna see her.'

The poor lad said naething, but buried his face in his hands on the table, and I left him to endure the first brunt o' this new sorrow alone.

The very next day the sun burst forth from the clouds—that is to say, a letter arrived from Australia with remittance for passage and necessary outfit. It was a kindly letter, and well fitted to act like oil on troubled water. Ay, and it had the desired effect. What can for ever keep down the heart of youth ? Willie was in the hindmost week o' his time. He was in good health and high hope. He had fifty pounds in hand for passage and purchases, and he had his ain time to pay it in. Yet in the midst o' his ain good fortune he recurred to his mother's voyage.

' If I but kenn'd where to write to my poor mother.'

' Hoot, Willie,' I said, ' she is sure to send a letter here with her address, and the first time we write you we'll enclose it. A postage stamp now-a-days mak's a' distances alike. As weel be fifteen thousand miles awa' as three thousand. You canna conveniently skip ower ony o' thae distances to pay a visit, but a postage stamp will do the business and bring friends nearer thegither ; as you say the telescope clips the distance between the earth and the moon. If there's onybody here that might be allowed to repine I think it's mysel' ; but I winna say a single word o' repinin' now. I've said my say before, and now let's join heads and hands in making ready, and let's be thankfu' that a' things as far as gane hae wrought together for gude.'

But I was counting the chickens before they had a' come in. There was an epistle that came in the end o' that week, the most extraordinary that my auld een ever saw. It was a sort of a damper, though it should rather have provoked laughter, but we couldna laugh, so it made us sad. It was addressed Mr William Paterson, Mr John Macaulde, Mitherton, and ran thus :—

‘ Manse, Sandiholes.

‘ Dear Sir,—I understand you are on the eve of departure for Australia. Have the goodness to take charge of the small packet addressed to Mr Andrew Scott, Victoria Street, Melbourne. That gentleman may perhaps be of service to you in your adopted country. I have heard good reports of you, which afford me much pleasure, and I hope the good qualities of home growth which you are said to possess will not deteriorate by being transplanted to another hemisphere. Hold

fast by the Christian principles that good people have taught you. You will then be a credit to yourself and others, who may not loudly rejoice in your welfare, yet will be glad to hear of it notwithstanding. For the sake of your friends here, who sit under my ministry, as well as for your own, I should be glad if I could be of some service to you. I have sent you a small parcel of books per rail, which may be useful to you on the voyage if you ponder them well, and ask a blessing on the good seed. You will please let me know if I can be of further service to you. May He who measures the waters in the hollow of His hand be with you when you see the wonders of the mighty deep ! And now, oh, young man, remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, and He will not forsake thee in the days of thy age, if thou art spared so long. Life is too short for trifling and mummery. Be an earnest worker. Whatever good work thy hands findeth to do, do it with all thy might. Work while it is day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work ; and while thou art diligent in thy calling, see thou neglect not the things that have regard to thy immortal soul, so that thou mayest be blessed in this life and in that which is to come. Farewell.—Yours, in Christian fellowship,

‘ JAMES KNOX.’

Weel, that letter maist took awa' my breath. Kennin' what I ken, I was like to grow sick when I heard it read. I looked at Willie—he'll no be whiter when he lies in his shroud—but his een were glaring like flaughts o' fire. He seized his bonnet, pulled it o'er his brow, and rushed out o' the house. Oh, that fearfu' man ! could he no let the creature leave his native land in peace ? Maybe he means weel, but he canna hae ony feelings, or he never could hae written sic a letter as that to the puir lad ; and—Gude forgie me !—I canna get the thocht o' hypocrisy out o' my heid. I may be wrang, but that letter, considering a' the circumstances, displays a state o' mind beyond my comprehension a' thegither.

Willie came in about bedtime as wet wi' sweat as if he had washed his head in the burn. He gaed ben to his bedroom without a word ; but I followed him, and, putting my arm round his neck, kissed him. I hadn'a done the like afore, even when he was a laddie, for neither laddies nor young men care for bein' kissed by auld wives ; but he returned my kiss, and said—

‘ God bless my dear, kind mother ! I'm no calm enough yet to speak of that letter, though I've raced half-dozen o' miles. I'll go to bed now, and tell you what I think about it next morning.’

I dinna think either o' us sleepit weel that night. When I was in bed I asked my gudeman what he thought Willie should do in the matter.

'Leave that to himself,' he replied.

'But what wad you do if you were in his place ?'

'That's hard to say,' quoth he.

'Weel, can you no tell me what you think wad be the right thing to do under the circumstances ?'

'Weel, if you maun hae my opinion, I think the right way wad be to send back baith letter and parcel. But dinna you interfere in the matter ; just let Willie do as he likes.'

It was strange that baith the auld man and the young ane, when he got cooled down, should come to the same conclusion. Willie sent back baith next mornin'.

I asked him if he had written 'declined, with thanks,' on the parcel.

'No,' he said. 'I don't feel thankful, and why should I say so ? In ordinary matters I would use ordinary words of form ; but to use them in this case would be very like falsehood, so I have written 'Returned,' with the proper address. The letter I have put in a clean envelope, and addressed it in the ordinary way. And now we will dismiss this matter from our minds. I am ashamed to have been so much moved by it.'

A' Willie's things were packed and ready for removal. The time was fast approaching when we had to say the wae fu' word, Fareweel. The gudeman's voice faltered as he said—

'You have been as a son to us, Willie ; we'll miss you sairly : but the auld and the young cauna bide aye thegither. Be as good a man as you hae been a laddie and a youth. God bless you ! Fareweel !'

When the puir lad took me in his arms, and murmured 'Mither,' I broke doun a' thegither, and now I just mind hearin' the word 'Fareweel,' as in a dream.

I canna write ony mair at this time, and maun close the book till I am mair composed. My auld een fill wi' tears, and I canna see the words, for aye the lines o' the auld sang come again to my memory—

'O mickle my heart forebodes to me
I never will meet thee mair.'

NOTE BY JAMES MACAULDE.

My grandmother wrote no more about Willie after this in her little book. She was rather low in spirits till the first letter arrived from Australia. It was every way satisfactory, and cheered her up a great deal. William Mudie, as he now called himself, was a prosperous man. Many valuable presents he sent to his second mither, as he called my grandmother, until at length she positively forbade him to be so lavish of his means, promising at the same time to apply to

him if ever she should be in need. His mother sent her address from New York, which was duly forwarded to Australia. I understand some one was employed to look after the couple, and not lose sight of them in the great city. Paterson did not live long ; the cheap rum was too much for him. His widow was sent home. She had a room in Mitherton, where she lived on a comfortable allowance from her son, and thenceforth conducted herself in a respectable manner.

I believe it was urged on William Mudie by a certain party that he should make some advance to amicable intercourse with his father, by apologising for his former rudeness in returning his letter and present, adding that he should remember the Fifth Commandment. Here he was inflexible. 'The Command you refer to,' he said in answer, 'should be understood more in the spirit than the letter. The words 'Thy father and thy mother' are joined together in the text as 'household words.' Honour to whom honour is due. Is it due, do you think, to a human being whose offspring are by him as unregarded as puppy dogs are by their male progenitors ? I could reverence the grey hairs of an honourable father were he never so poor, but bid me not honour where I can neither respect nor love ?' Perhaps Willie was stubborn and prejudiced in this matter, but one must have lived his life, stood in his shoes, as the saying is, before condemning him. The poor erring minister is gone—peace be with him—so is she that was his Nemesis so long.

William Mudie has now a wife and family of sons and daughters. He married Annie Smart, who went to keep house for her brother, but who, like a sensible girl, preferred to keep house for herself and her husband. They have a great sheep farm, and Willie can now count more sheep than the patriarch Job in the days of his prosperity.

THE SUPERSEDED MAN.

'Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toll.'

RUSHING on, our racing steamer
Runneth down the clumsy craft,
Let us save the nimble swimmer,
Leave the rest to boat or raft.
Cries of drowning men pursue us,
But we leave them all to drown,
Steaming on, their fate unheeding,
Caring only for our own,
Reckless who may next go down.

On we go, by horse of iron,
Rolling on in reckless haste—
Speeding past the old wayfarer
Left upon the dreary waste ;
There the wolf will haunt him ever,
Thus his shadow waneth so,
Ere he reach the fatal river
When the sun of life is low,—
Why should he be loath to go ?

Ye that speed the onward motion,
Tell us, through the rushing wind,
What avails your vaunted progress
To the wretch you leave behind ?
What to him your wondrous triumphs ?
He is sacrificed to one—
Driven from the world of labour,
Like a Pariah under ban,
Is the Superseded Man.

See him as a walking sleeper—
Not a dog on him will fawn ;
As a pale belated spectre,
Left bewildered in the dawn ;

As an alien in nature—
 Element of other star—
 Here intruding, out of keeping,
 With the harmonies at war—
 An embodiment of jar.

As he passeth by the factory
 He can hear the arms of power
 Rattling ever on untiring,
 Working wonders hour by hour.
 In his heart the iron enters,
 Graving deep this sense of doom :
 Rigid sinews, vision failing,
 Suit not heckle now, nor loom—
 Underneath the ground is room.

Should he look for railway labour,
 Beg for work at pick or spade,
 At a glance the shrewd contractor
 Knows the cast-away of trade—
 Sees him wan, and lank, and grizzled ;
 Shakes his knowing head the while,
 For he has his choice of thousands
 From prolific Sister Isle—
 'Navvies' seasoned with the toil.

In his home, if home we call it,
 See him by the cold hearthstone,
 Gazing on the smouldering ashes,
 As his state he ponders on.
 In the chilling air of silence,
 Never stirred by word of cheer,
 Thus he with himself communeth—
 Every thought might claim a tear
 Were it breathed for ears to hear.

'I, alas ! have wife and children,
 Galling are my kindred bands,
 For the elder rear the younger,
 While I sit with folded hands ;

While they in life's early morning
 Bear the burthen of the day,
 I, in bitterness of spirit
 Grow, by premature decay,
 Old before my hair is grey.

‘ O, how galling is dependence
 To the spirit of a man,
 On the labour of his children ;
 Thus reversing Nature's plan.
 Shall I weary their affections
 With a load of abject years ;
 Eat the bitter bread unwelcome,
 Moistened with an old man's tears ?—
 Thoughts that pierce like barbèd spears.

‘ Shall I be a public pauper,
 With the Poorhouse for a home ;
 Wear the livery of my order
 Showing what I have become ?
 Go, when I have leave of absence,
 Crouching through my native town,
 Seeing strange familiar faces
 Everywhere ignore my own ?—
 This is to be broken down.

‘ Oh, but Life's a gloomy ocean,
 Darker than the dismal shore,
 When the castaway of labour
 Sees the light of Hope no more.
 He may weary for the dawning
 In the far horizon dun,
 Dawning of the day eternal—
 Truly underneath the sun
 Other hope for him is none.’

Thus the man that's superseded,
 May bewail his wretched state,
 Can there aught be done to aid him ?
 His misfortune is not fate :

Ye that drive the world of labour,
 Straining ever in the van,
 Spare a time for good endeavour,
 And devise a saving plan
 For the Superseded Man.

THE POET OF THE AGE.

'Tennyson is not yet the Poet of the Age, but he may perhaps become so.
 —Critique on ALFRED TENNYSON.

'Of all the cants in this canting world, preserve us from the cant of
 criticism.'

Is this myth, or man, a-coming,
 Promised oft, awaited long?
 Are we prosing in the shadow
 Cast before this Prince of Song?
 Is he done with idle dreaming,
 Has he rhymed his maiden page,
 And forsaken classic muses
 For the Spirit of the Age?

What may be his theme for charming
 Evil spirits out of man?
 Will he rouse the mindless masses
 Swarming in the dismal fen?
 Will he hold the upland climbers,
 Listening in their own despite?
 Will he flood the eyes of Fortune
 With a new access of light?

Will he quicken sympathetic
 Feeling for the slaving poor,
 In life's high exclusive places,
 And maintain it firm and sure;
 Till the groups of rustics painted
 By Old Masters of renown,
 Will not be so highly valued
 As a living breathing clown?

Empty theme of siege and battle
 May his teeming brain employ ;
 Siege of sieges far surpassing
 Homer's old affair of Troy ;*
 And the Nightingale of England
 May adorn his storied page—
 Episode of rarest beauty
 For the Epic of the Age.

But as war, though still in favour
 With misrulers of their kind,
 May not be the master passion
 Of the thousands deaf and blind
 To the blare and gauds of glory,
 Why, perhaps he'll cut it short,
 That's to say, his epic poem—
 Would The Age be sorry for't?

Will he sing a hymn to Mammon,
 An indignant strain sublime,
 To embody all the spirit
 Of his worship in our time ;
 When our innocent heart's devotion
 To our earthly god is given,
 While our lying lips are breathing
 Shallow prayers to God in Heaven?

There's a lust of gold in Britain
 That's enough to stain her name—
 Her achievements great are cancelled
 Almost by this crying shame.
 Herdes within her will degrade her
 Though her navies guard her coasts,
 Still her harpy brood will hover
 On the skirts of sweltering hosts.

But the Onward March of Progress
 May our Coming Bard engage ;

* This was written during the siege of Sebastopol, which has since ended by the siege of Paris.

That should be the king of subjects
 For the Poet of the Age,
 Mounting higher than Parnassus,
 Through the gloom that underlies,
 He may see the van emerging
 In the light of brighter skies ;

And to darkened minds descending,
 Sing that steam and whirling wheels,
 And the wireway of the lightning
 Underneath the racing keels,
 All are tending to abrasion
 Of old Mammon's golden hills,
 And the precious debris filling
 Up the slough of human ills.

And that all our grand inventions
 Tend to drain its swampy soil,
 Multiply the croaker's comforts,
 And diminish still their toil ;
 Though they are the last to see it,
 To their own advancement blind,—
 O for the Bard, so long a-coming,
 To enlighten humankind !

THE PRIVATEER.

THERE came a daring Privateer,
 Some ninety years ago,
 To raise the wind without delay,
 And he would have it so ;
 Or batter down our ancient town,
 As all the world doth know.

The Provost, from the Ballast Hill,
 Long spied the threat'ning sail,
 While ancient skippers shook their heads,
 And chewed the twist pig-tail ;
 And cockëd hats and powdered wigs
 Surmounted faces pale.

That day the wabster left his loom,
 The cobbler left his stool ;
 And a' the laddies got the play—
 The dominie left the schule ;
 The tailor jumpit aff his board,
 And left his guse to cule.

The heights were clad baith far and near,
 And thousands lined the shore ;
 Down plunged an anchor in the bay—
 Up went the tricolor :
 Was ever such a brazen rogue
 In the thieving trade before ?

The 'Yellow Meg,' of Wester Ha'en,
 He captured in the bay—
 The Flying Skipper's famous craft
 Became the Rover's prey ;
 And every soul aboard the twain
 Was captive ta'en that day.

Meanwhile, the bodies on the shore
 Were watching every motion,
 And now they cry, 'A boat ! a boat !'
 And all were in commotion :
 A thousand babbling voices blent
 Rose louder than the ocean.

The boat swept in between the Heads,
 And each man shipped his oar ;
 As recklessly, sans flag of truce,
 A liffy leapt on shore,
 With hat in hand, he parlez-vouzed—
 'Messieurs, votre serviteur ?'

Amid the rush, the crush, the push,
 The shoving here and there,
 He held a missive in his hand—
 'Present Monsieur le Maire,
 Or, after him, de chiefest man
 In Scotland, oderwhere.'

The Provost could not read the scrawl
 The Privateer had sent ;
 In sad distress he scratched his wig—
 The Bailies glowered ahint ;
 The very Deacons stood amazed,
 In mute bewilderment.

Till came the Reverend Mr Mac,
 Nor book nor band had he ;
 The crowd gave way on every side ;
 He strode undauntedly,
 With pistols in his pouches' syde,
 And sword upon his thie.

He read the letter, line by line,
 Expounding, as a text,
 The base compound of Lingua Franc,
 Low Dutch, and English, mixed ;
 Exciting bravery and fear,
 And all that be betwixt.

A Council then was called in haste ;
 Each member spoke at once ;
 ' We'll go on board,' said Provost Greig,
 And prig him down, perchance.
 ' Na, by my saul ! ' quoth Bailie Kyd,
 ' He'd whup us aff to France.'

Up starts the reverend gentleman,
 So urgent was the case ;
 And there was silence over all,
 As if they waited grace ;
 And, like a quivering jelly, shook
 Each pale and pursy face.

Then instant forth, as bottle froth,
 His bold defiance burst :—
 ' What ! shall we shame the Auld Round O ? *

* The Auld Round O.—I may mention, in case a stranger should read this, the O is the circular window in the Abbey of Arbroath.

No!—Rather perish first :
 Away ! and say to Captain Fall,
 We dare him to the worst.'

' Messieurs bon jour !' with great sang froid
 The envoy sought his boat ;
 Departing, he a signal made,
 Then followed, quick as thought,
 The flash, the loud report, the ball,—
 A base, discourteous shot.

Whiz went the iron o'er their heads,
 Red cheeks grew pale with fear ;
 Crack went a block from a herring smack,
 Like a drop from Beauty's ear :
 Now, every man was hard at work
 On board that Privateer.

The captured Skipper walked her deck,
 He said to Captain Fall,
 ' The people on the Ballast Hill
 Don't seem to fear your ball.'
 ' Me make dem fear ! Ha, ha ! you see—
 Mon Dieu !—dem running all.'

And now, in the assaulted town,
 Spread terror everywhere,
 And fathers ran, and mothers ran,
 Bewildered, here and there ;
 And hundreds hurried up the Den,
 With bairns and bundled gear.

And all around the town that day—
 Fu' mony a brawny lout,
 Wi' wife and bairns, and pocks o' meal,
 Or bannocks in a clout—
 Ran scampering o'er the fields afar,
 To lie amang the nowt.

Meanwhile, the brave remained to save
 The honour of the town :
A gallant feint they tried, in haste,
 They mounted cannon soon—
 Great wooden pumps, on cartless wheels,*
 To scare the murdering loon.

But still on board the Privateer
 The guns did blaze away,
 And red hot balls flew o'er their heads
 Throughout that fearful day ;
 The bricks did shake on chimney tops
 And some did fall, they say.

In this heroic band, that braved
 That robber of the sea,
 There was a silly tailor loon,
 And 'Simple' hight was he ;
 'I vow,' he cried, 'to shoot him dead—
 Ay, Simple though I be.'†

And off he went at ebb of tide,
 With firelock in his hand ;
 And, under cover of a rock,
 He boldly took his stand ;
 And riddled the Rover's flapping sails
 At his own word of command ;

Till a wag aboard the Privateer
 Took a base, ignoble aim ;
 The glowing ball across the brine,
 Like a bolt of thunder came,
 Rebounding from the splintered rocks,
 And hissing in the faem.

* Great wooden pumps on cartless wheels.—Said to be true.
 † Simple Tailor.—The self-accepted cognomen of James Smith, tailor in Arbroath, who fired upon the Privateer in the way described. I remember when a boy of making one in the juvenile mob that used to follow the Simple Tailor along the streets when he was in his cups. He seemed to enjoy the fun himself, shouting now and again, 'Simple though I be.'

Forth from his cover, like a hare,
 The 'Simple' tailor ran :
 The best game cock in our game town
 Can do but what he can :—
 Was ere six-pounder fired before
 At the ninth part of a man ?

'Twere long to tell of what befel
 Throughout that fearful day,
 When Captain Fall, with powder and ball,
 On our brave town did play ;
 Till, fairly baffled at the last,
 The rascal bore away.

Then in the battered town at once
 The loud hurra uprose,
 And then expected troops arrived,
 So handy, at the close,—
 A sergeant's party, all recruits,
 Hot marching from Montrose.

Lament we now the glorious dead,
 Whose blood the stones did stain ;
 Dame Partlet and her brood shall live*
 In this immortal strain ;
 The hapless chickens and their dam
 At one fell swoop were slain.

Now, glory to our gallant sires,
 Who baffled Captain Fall ;
 And honour to our noble selves,
 The sons of heroes, all ;
 And never may the 'Auld Round O'
 Be scathed by cannon ball !

* Dame Partlet and her brood.—These were the only victims. A hen was sitting with her chickens under her wings, when an unlucky ball struck and killed

'All the little chickens and their dam,
 At one fell swoop.'

NOTE TO THE PRIVATEER.

Chambers's Gazetteer of Scotland gives the following account of the Privateer's attack on Arbroath:—During the war in 1781 this coast was annoyed by a French Privateer, named the Fearnought of Dunkirk, commanded by one Fall. On the evening of the 23rd of May, he came to anchor in the bay of Arbroath, and fired a few shot into the town; after which he sent a flag of truce on shore, with the following letter:

‘At Sea, May twenty-third.

‘GENTLEMEN.—I send these two words to inform you that I will have you to bring to the French Colour in less than a quarter of an hour, or I set the town on fire directly; such is the order of my master, the King of France, I am sent by. Send directly the mair and chiefs of the town to make some agreement with me, or I'll make my duty. It is the will of yours.

To Monsieurs Mair of the town called
Arbrought, or in his absence, to the chief
man after him in Scotland.’

The worthy magistrates, with a view to gain time to arm the inhabitants, and send expresses for military aid, in the true spirit of diplomacy, gave an evasive answer to Monsieur Fall's letter, reminding him that he had mentioned no terms of ransom, and begging he would do no injury to the town, till he should hear from them again. Upon this Fall wrote a second letter to them in the following terms:

‘At sea, eight o'clock in the afternoon.

‘GENTLEMEN,—I received just now your answer, by which you say I ask no terms. I thought it was needless since I asked you to come aboard for agreement. But here are my terms: I will have £30,000 sterling at least, and 6 of the chiefs men of the town for otage. Be speedy, or I shoot your town away directly, and I set fire to it. I am gentlemen your servant. I sent some of my crew to you, but if some harm happens to them, you'll be sure will hang up the main yard all the prisoners we have on board.

To Monsieur the chief man of Arbrought
in Scotland.’

The magistrates having now got some of the inhabitants armed, and their courage further supported by the arrival of some military from Montrose, set Fall at defiance, and told him to ‘do his worst, for they would not give him a farthing.’ ‘Whereupon,’ says the worthy historian of this memorable transaction in the annals of Arbroath, ‘terribly enraged, and, no doubt, greatly disappointed, he began a heavy fire upon the town, and continued for a long time, but happily it did no harm, except knocking down some chimney tops, and burning the fingers of those who took up his balls, which were heated.’

This account, leaving out lesser incidents and details, agrees pretty well with the traditions of the town. The rover had pointed his guns too high. Almost all the balls flew over the town. Many of them were buried in the earth on the braes of Cairnie, and picked up afterwards. There are a few of these balls still kept as mementoes of the Privateer's attack on the town.

ON THE CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF
ROBERT BURNS.

Leave ye now the laurel growing,
Break no holly boughs to-day ;
Evermore the leaves and berries
Round his head will rustling play.
Bring ye but the flowering aloe,
Add it to the wreath he wears,
For the tree that fadeth never,
Blooms but in a hundred years.

This memorial day we greet him,
Dearest of the laureled band—
If the tones of mortal voices
Vibrate in the spirit land ;
If the waves of earthly feeling
Beat upon the heavenly shore,
We would with our gratulations
Mingle our regrets no more.

Lands of Bards who die neglected,
Witness our atonement all ;
Hear the Mother of the Nations
To her distant daughters call—
'Honour Burns, my son immortal !'
Hark, their vast response returns,
Booming o'er the world of waters,
'To the memory of BURNS !'

What are all the old ovations,
What the laurel crowns of Rome,
When a race delights to honour
One who had a lowly home ?
But for sake of puir auld Scotland,
Unrequited while he breathed,
He hath left a tuneful treasure—
Never was the like bequeathed.

But we have an evil spirit
 That the famous will defame,
 Quick or dead : a ghoul insatiate,
 England's scorn, and Scotland's shame.*
 Hence Detraction sanctimonious !
 Take thy envious brood with thee ;
 Parasites, who, but to flourish,
 Poison their upholding tree.

But the acorn of old Coila
 Towers unscathed, a mighty oak,
 Rooted in the heart of Scotland,
 Proof against Time's felling stroke.
 In its song-inspiring shadow
 Chaunt the minnisinger bands,
 And its boughs are trees outspreading,
 Branching over many lands.

Soul of Burns, our kindred spirits
 Greet thee this memorial day,
 Send our love by flash of lightning
 That requires no wiry way.
 Thou hast passed the fatal river,
 Found thy 'blissful place of rest,'
 But thy mantle, lost for ever,
 Warms no other poet's breast.

* Burns's detractors, with shame be it confessed, have been mostly Scotchmen.

NOTE TO THE CENTENARY POEM.

This poem was written for the Centenary Supper Party that met in the Star Inn, Arbroath, on the 25th January 1859. A Glasgow publisher proposed to publish the best of the centenary poems in a volume, and requested, through the press, those who had written verses on the occasion to forward them. Six hundred and odd poems were sent, fifty of which were selected for publication. This poem had the honour to be one of the fifty. Unfortunately, the Crystal Palace directors demurred to allow the prize poem to be published in the volume. There was some delay on that account, and some of the contributors, too, were tardy in forwarding their poems. The consequence was, that the excitement of the time cooled down before the volume appeared. Hence it was not very successful.

A VOICE FROM SNIG'S END,

WITH AN IRISH ECHO.

WHERE is our pleasant home and teeming garner ?
Where is the land so soon to be our own ?
Where is the tutor of each delving learner ?
And where have all our poor instalments gone ?
And echo answered—*Done !*

Where is our cow that stands knee-deep in clover,
With udder swelling till she scarce can budge,
Whose lacteal treasures flow all winter over ?
She will enrich us, and without a grudge.
And echo answered—*Fudge !*

Where are the ducks that daily were to lay us
Those great goose eggs, all seasons, foul or fair ?
Where are the goslings that would doubly pay us
For all the ova that we had to spare ?
And echo answered—*Where ?*

Where are the mighty hogs that were to batten
Upon our surplus taters in the sty ?
Where are the bacon pigs we were to fatten ?—
Five pounds a-piece—Will anybody buy ?
And echo answered—*Try !*

Our ducks won't lay but only at their leisure,
And goose eggs only when the moon is full ;
Our pigs won't grow the faster for our pleasure,
And och ! our cow—she is an Irish bull.
And echo answered—*Gull !*

Where is our car that dogs delight to bark at ?
Where is the extra produce that will pay ?
Where is our ass to draw it to the market,
And pick up his subsistence by the way ?
And echo answered—*Bray !*

Where are the long ears nature should have lent us ?

Where is the marvel that this truth surpasses ?
Ould father Feargus to the fields hath sent us,

To dig our way towards the higher classes.
And echo answered—*Asses !*

Where is the author of this scheme colossal ?

Where is our sage and philanthropic head ?
Where is the gintleman would rather lose all

Than see his childer badly off for bread ?
And echo answered—*Dead !*

But what is life laid down as pledge of honour ?

A specious cobweb for the fustian flies ;
And what's the blarney of the great O'Connor,

That takes Utopian ninnies by surprise ?
And echo answered—*Lies !*

NOTE.

Snig's End was the somewhat ominous name of one of the pieces of ground purchased by Fergus O'Connor for allocation among his disciples. I believe him to have been earnest in his desire to benefit the masses, and honest in his intentions politically and socially. But as with other men similarly constituted, his projects were all like the moon, turning but one side to his mental vision. Such a man is perhaps not far removed from insanity, and therefore we should be tender of his memory. But when he assumes the part of a leader, he becomes dangerous, or mischievous at least; and so for the sake of other men, whose minds are similar in kind, but less in degree, and who are therefore liable to become dupes to such a *promising* philanthropist, the utter unfitness of such a man as a guide should be held up to view, irrespective of personal considerations, as belonging to the great aggregate of human experience, and available for instruction and warning. For this reason, even such a squib as 'A Voice from Snig's End,' may be allowed a second appearance.

THE HAT.

SAY, why should folk stare with their mouths all
agape,
And turn up the white of their eyes, man !
At the colour, or shape, of a hat or a cap
On the head of a fool or a wise man ?

This hat has been banished these three hundred
years,
And here all the devilment lies, man !
That this obsolete hat should now fit so pat
On the nob of a Cardinal Wiseman.

Cries honest John Bull, 'Don't we 'ate this 'ere 'at ?'
Quoth the Pope, 'That is all in our eyes, man !
You have lads that wear mitres, might come to St
Peters,
And get hats like our Cardinal Wiseman :

Our blessing will stick to this eminent hat,
And England will find it a prize, man !
She may flourish again, as our States do, and Spain,
And all who have Cardinal Wisemen.'

Cries Pat, 'Pray your Holiness, give us a hat,
Sure we hav'n't the money to buy's one ;
Och ! wouldn't we thrive, like murther alive,
If we had but a Cardinal Wiseman ?'

Says Sawnie, 'We fear that Mahoun will be next ;
It needna be ony surprise, man !
Though a Mufti MacTurk was established in York,
Or in London, like Cardinal Wiseman ;

But we piously hope that the meikle black deil
That danced awa' wi' the exciseman,
Will come fiddlin' soon through London toun,
And dance aff wi' this Cardinal Wiseman !

NOTE TO THE HAT.

Perhaps the Cardinal's hat, as a head-piece, is not more deserving of ridicule than a Bishop's mitre. But the *obsolete hat*, with all its involvements, was meant to recommend a retrograde movement to us fast-going heretics, so that if the old lumbering Roman coach was jolting hopelessly behind, we might turn back and moderate our pace to keep it company. And trulv a good many, from the Episcopalian ranks, few from the Presbyterian, have turned back to join the antiquated procession behind the old vehicle. A painter was working one day, when the lady of the house, who liked a joke and could make one too, entered the room where he was, and said— 'Painter, did you see our cat? Poor thing, I fear it is lost altogether.' 'What like a cat was it, mem?' asked the painter. 'A pretty tortoise-shell cat,' replied the lady. 'O then, mem,' quoth the painter. 'I saw it a while ago jump o'er the dyke, down into the Catholic priest's garden.' 'Dear me!' exclaimed the lady, 'a well brought-up Protestant cat, to go away among the Catholics.' Now, by what concatenation of ideas does this feline joke associate itself in my mind with the Most Noble Marquis of Bute? I leave this kittle question to the metaphysicians. But indeed I never read in the newspapers of a gentle or noble convert from the English Church to the Church of Rome, but I say to myself, there goes another tortoise-shell *cat* over the dyke, into the Catholic priest's garden. Truly it is not a great jump from a Ritualistic English Church to a Roman Catholic one. Were our fathers far wrong, when they said that Prelacy was next to Papacy? I see, in the news from Rome, that the Pope assumes the air of a martyr, and immures himself, a self-constituted prisoner, in the Vatican; and that he is having carriage drives made out, in the Gardens of the Palace, for riding exercise. Poor old mulish infallible doting body! He has indeed 'hoisted himself with his own petard.' But for all that, I should not wonder, although the Infallible has fallen on evil times, if a few more tortoise-shell *cats* were to leap from the roof of John Bull's Chapel, over the wall, into the poor Pope's Garden.

GARIBALDI.

We honour him, because he gave himself,
 Gave heart and soul, and all without reserve,
The cause of his loved Italy to serve,
 Without a thought of gaining power or self.

We honour him who, when in evil days
 The sacred flame was suffered to expire,
Rekindled it with his own native fire,
 And set the house of bondage in a blaze.

The flame became a conflagration wide,
 And far and near the fervent heat was felt;
The heart of Italy did seethe and melt,
 And all her glorious dead were vivified.

Then, in her youth renewed, the quickened land
 Cast off the Incubus that held her down,
And on the tablets of her old renown,
 Inscribed his name who waved the burning
 brand.

Though Wisdom now may shake her locks and say,
 ‘The Patriot’s heart is better than his head’—
Let her remember that a land was dead,
 And brought to life again but yesterday.

And so, most surely, in the time to come,
 The wondrous story ever will be told,
And Garibaldi’s name will be enrolled
 Among the best and bravest of Old Rome.

TONAL'S TRAVELS.

OCH ! Shonie, noo, she'll tell you true
About the Railiway, man !
Arbroath be gang ta Forfar toun
Ta see the holiday, man !
Hersel' she'll pay the shillin' down,
And get the wee bit print, man !
Till let her in the fleein' toun,
And leave the warl' ahint, man !

Awa' we flee by Collietoun ;
She no ha'e time for think, man !
But when we come to Lousymill,
The iron prute be drink, man !
And when she get her pelly fu',
She gie an unco skirl, man !
And hostet, when she tak' the gate,
Till a' her banes be dirl, man !

And noo, the dykes upon the ground,
They a' be fleein' by, man !
The meikle trees be try a race,
And frightit a' the kye, man !
The houses flee like heilan' deer,
The fields be whirl about, man !
But a' the fouk be sit like stane,
Tho' a' be rin-thereout, man !

She sit beside a shentlemans
Tat print the meikle news, man !
And tak' hersel' for heilan' laird
Because she wear the trews, man !
She tell her o' especial train,
Tat be so very big, man !
Her head be up in Forfar toun,
Her tail on Clokim Brig, man !

But noo, she see the Forfar fouk
 Be glowerin' in a raw, man !
 And when she stap upon the grund,
 The stanes be slip awa', man !
 And when she sit upon her pack,
 They cry, be Tonal' fu', man !
 She tell the lousy wabster loons
 Ta pack ta Dioul dhu, man !

And noo, they tak' the iron peast,
 And pit her in the byre, man !
 But a' the meat she eat be coal,
 And a' the dung be fire, man !
 But tak' her up ta Shonie Groat's,
 And pang her weel wi' peat, man !
 She wad come o'er the heilan' hills
 Like Satan's coach o' state, man !

MY AIN WIFE AT HAME.

TROTH, I'll hae a wife i' the spring o' my life,
 And nae bring an honest man's dochter to shame,
 For the bachelor chiel' often gaes to the deil ;
 Sae I'll gae belyve to my ain wife at hame.

And when I may fail my friends at the ale,
 They'll tell me the pleasures o' wedlock are tame ;
 But I'll think o' my Jean, sittin' weary alone,
 And I'll hie me awa' to my ain wife at hame.

I' the lang winter night, by the fire blazin' bright,
 I'll think nae o' wealth, and I'll reck nae o' fame,
 But I'll sit on my chair, and hae naething to fear,
 In our warld o' love, wi' my ain wife at hame.

And I'll read frae the page o' some auld warld sage,
 Wha stands in a niche in the temple o' fame ;
 And she will comment sae weel thereanent,
 I'll get plenty o' lear wi' my ain wife at hame.

THE CROOKIT STICK AT LAST.

My lassie has a bonnie face
 But fickle mind I trew,
For aye she changes wi' the moon
 The auld love for the new.
Her blindit lovers come to see
 Their folly when it's past,
An' syne they say, She'll ha'e to tack'
 The crookit stick at last.

Now, Maggie, lass, you may misuse
 Your gift o' beauty rare,
Till it may be a canker bloom,
 An' to yoursel' a snare.
O what is beauty wantin' grace ?
 A weed that withers fast—
A flowery weed that is nae worth
 The crookit stick at last.

O Maggie, when I see you now,
 What can I do but sigh,
To think that in a breast sae fair
 Sae vain a heart should lie ?
Your name and fame, aye dear to me,
 Cauld witherin' scorn may blast,
An' mak' ye, lass, fu' fain to tak'
 The crookit stick at last.

She's but a slur on womankind,
 However fair she be,
That perils a' her life o' love
 For an hour o' vanity ;
Wha tramples on an honest heart,
 That at her feet is cast,
She's worthy but to want, or get
 The crookit stick at last.

THE HAIRST FIELD.

YE mind, Mary, lass, o' the blithe days o' hairst,
Wi' the daffin' o' youth, and the jokin' o' eild ;
How they paired us thegither, and ca'd us lad and
lass ?

By my troth, they were na far aglie on yon hairst
field.

Ye mind how they set up your cheeks in a lowe,
When they counted the bairns that our wedlock
might yield ;
How we joined in the jokin', and made licht o' love,
That the lave might na read our hearts on yon
hairst field ?

Ye mind, Mary, lass, o' the blithe loosin' shower,
When we baith ran to ae stuck, outower for a
bield !

We creepit thegither, but the wet had a' the wyte,
For we saw neither auld nor young on yon hairst
field.

O the claspin' and kissin' o' love when its new,
The bliss that by cauld words may ne'er be
revealed !

Our hearts beat thegither as gin we had but ane ;
O happy, happy hour o' life on yon hairst field !

BY MARYKIRK.

[Music by W. Jackson, Bradford.]

By Marykirk, a sweet bird sang
When trees were green and waters clear ;
That sweet bird sang the hale day lang,
And charmed the hearts o' men to hear.
But down upon a flowery bank
The wily fowler laid his snare,
And in a weary prison cage
The sweet bird pined, and sang nae mair.

By Marykirk there bloomed a flower,
Beside the winding Esk it grew ;
And, oh, it charmed the sunny light,
And ilk wanton wind that blew.
But rude hands pu'd that flower sae sweet,
And fause lips kissed its leaves sae fair ;
It faded in a cheerless bower,
And charmed the sight o' men nae mair.

By Marykirk the birds may sing,
But dowie are their notes to me ;
On Craigie haughs the flowers may bloom,
But now nae mair delight my e'e.
O Mary ! though ye did me wrang,
I'm wae to think o' your downfa' ;
Poor silly bird, sae eithly snared,
Sweet flower, soon pu'd and flung awa'.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

[A Glee for Two Voices.]

I LO'E the blooming rose,
Ye lo'e the lily fair ;
And we may challenge Scotland wide
For sic anither pair—
The lily and the rose.
Ye'll sing to me o' your love,
I'll sing to you o' mine,
As the simple shepherd laddies
Were wont to do langsyne.

First. I lo'e the blooming rose,
Second. I loe the lily fair ;
Both. And we may challenge Scotland wide
For sic anither pair—
The lily and the rose.

First. I lo'e the blooming rose,
Sae bonnie and sae sweet ;
There's nae her peer upon the brier,
Amang the dewy weet :
My bonnie blooming rose,
My sweet bewitching queen,
Wi' her locks o' raven hair,
And her bonnie black een.
I lo'e the blooming rose, &c.

Second. I lo'e the lily fair,
Sae 'bonny and sae sweet ;
There's nae her peer in gay parterre,
Where flowery beauties meet :
Wi' her locks o' silky hair,
And her een o' melting blue,
And glistening rows o' pearl
Set in her sweet wee mou'.

Second. Ye lo'e the blooming rose,
First. Ye lo'e the lily fair, &c.

First. I met my blooming rose,
And I lookit in her een—
She loot the jetty fringes fa',
Lest love should there be seen ;
I clasped her jimp'y waist—
She had nae will to flee,
But a' my kisses ower again
She gave them back to me.
I lo'e the blooming rose, &c.

Second. I met my lily fair,
She, bashfu', hung her head,
And borrowed frae your blooming rose
A blush o' glowing red ;
I kissed her rosy lips.
And my heart leapt up to pree ;
The lonely dell was Eden's yard
To my young love and me.

Second. Ye lo'e the blooming rose,
First. Ye lo'e the lily fair ;
Both. And we may challenge Scotland wide
For sic anither pair—
The lily and the rose.

PETER SPEID.

(From 'The Gusedub Record.')

BY THE LAST DOMINIE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

The future beckons me away,
Onward ever,
Earth revolves—I rest me never.
The Wandering Jew.

So sad, so sweet, the days that are no more.
Tennyson.

SOCIETY in a state of transition is subject to many heart-burnings, which affect both the mind and body of the common-weal. In former times, when symptoms of this questionable malady were manifested, the sage conservators of the public health became alarmed. Old Doctor Prejudice—who, if he is not the Wandering Jew, has lived as long, or longer, and seen as many countries—was sent by the powers that were, to physic the patient. The charlatan felt his pulse, examined his tongue, inquired about his habitudes, and all that sort of thing; then, with a solemn shake of the head, indicating his dangerous condition, prescribed some potent medicament, such as a few grains of recantation, with directions that he should be kept quiet; and in case of an access of delirium, which would be made manifest by wild hallucinations and incoherent ravings, he recommended that a strait-jacket should be always in readiness. If the patient refused the physic and tore the jacket, the ancient leech had recourse to phlebotomy, and sometimes to cautery, as the case might be more or less alarming. Yes, the inveterate quack persisted for a long time in purging the body politic by blood and fire; and it took the experience of many ages to convince him that his venerated panacea—killing—was not the way to convince or cure. As life is not held so cheap in modern times, he is not allowed to practice in such a summary way on the lives of the lieges. Now-a-days nobody will believe that burning heretics, so-called, is likely to promote unanimity and prosperity among mankind. This long-winded exordium brings me to the fact I meant to introduce, that in the old-fashioned town of Gusedub I can still see the antagonism kept up between Prejudice and Reason on matters about which the rest of the

world seems to have no longer any dispute. As the Bourbon, late of Naples, still holds on to Gaeta—[written in 1861]—so old Prejudice seems to have chosen our town for his last stronghold. But both must yield before Truth and Time.

Peter Speid was the champion of the young Dubbites, and old Andrew Lag was looked upon as the leader of the ancients. Peter was a mechanic, who held steam and machinery to be the great civilisers of the world, and the pioneers of a grand social millennium. Speak of hand-workers superseded and thrown out of employment, he counted them but as dust in the balance. He delighted to speculate on new inventions, and their probable effects in the future. He was a bit of a prophet in his way, not a political prophet; he would undertake to prove all political prophets to be mere kumbugs. They grounded their predictions on the narrow policy of the past; and political economy, he asserted, has ever been, and still is, in the rear of the noble army of progress—still dragged on reluctantly by the preceding mass. He stoutly asserted that, in spite of politics, and all such drags on the wheels of progress, any one possessed of ordinary sagacity, and not blinded by prejudice, but open to conviction, might—nay, must—foresee the good time coming when machinery would do all the drudgery of the world, would put an end to wars, and bring all mankind into brotherhood; when they would no longer earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, but live in ease and comfort, freed from the burthen of the primeval curse.

Such were the notions of Peter Speid, bachelor, who lived in Spindle Street with his old mother. The good woman admired her son's talents, but as she could never thoroughly understand him, was inclined to think that there was a bit of a craze somewhere in his upper storey; the more so as his late father had been a queer sort of a body in his time.

Andrew Lag, on the other hand, was a man of the old school—a pale-faced, grizzled, lathy wabster, who regretted the good old times, when, according to the Forfarian luminary,

‘The weaving price o’ ilk web
Wad buy a bow o’ meal.’

Andrew saw the world growing worse for the poor man every day. No cottar bodies now-a-days with a bit land and a cow; no twa-horse farms, where the gudeman sat at the head o’ the table, and fared the same as the Jocks and Jennies. The peasantry of Scotland, he declared, were gone, swept into the towns, and swallowed up in the vortex of trade, where their descendants, instead of the tramped meal-tubs of their fathers, will be glad to get half-a-peck on

credit. We have now, he would say, added field to field, and farm to farm, until the farmers are like lairds, and their hirelings like slaves. In their bothies, it was true, they had over-much freedom ; they wanted the orderly example, and the wholesome restraint of the family circle, which are the best safeguards of youth ; no one took cognisance of their incomings, so their evening liberty soon degenerated into license, that set at nought all the rules that they had respected in their father's house. And how much better are things managed in the towns he would ask ? Formerly the manufacturer with a few hands could live and let live, and was a friend and neighbour to his workmen ; but now he must have a hundred hands, or machinery to do the work of a thousand. He must build his villa ; keep his carriage ; fail in business, perhaps, and get on again better than before ; and must not be expected to recognise on the street any of the poor workmen who have laboured to build up his fortune. Now the small manufacturers, as well as the small farmers, are gone ; and the small shopkeepers also will soon be knocked out of existence. Capital is accumulated among the few, and these few rule over the many, because they are too many. Machinery is doing men's work, and men are becoming of less value. 'Tis of no use talking of the laws of supply and demand, for in this country, overcrowded with men and machines, we soon overtake any extra demand ; and even in the time of such demand, if we get a small rise of wages, we may be certain that it is a very temporary benefit ; nay, we may well question the benefit, for we are sure it will be withdrawn on the first appearance of glut in the market, and most likely a little more along with it, as wages generally rise by copper, and fall by silver. Wages is the corps reserve that our commanders fall back upon when hard pressed in front. It is very convenient to make good all deficiencies from the fund that should go to pay the workman ; and the temptation to encroach on this is all the stronger, inasmuch as a small matter withheld from each individual in a large concern will enable the respectable proprietor to keep up his dignity. And why should he not ? exclaims Andrew. What use has the swinish multitude for more than husks and rags ; if they had more, they would make an ill use o't. It's a braw wORLD, if folk would be content wi' their lot : just tak' what they get and be thankful, and pay a' due respect to their superiors.

Such is a sample of the antiquated notions of Andrew Lag, wabster, who admired the past, grumbled at the present, and feared the future. Peter and Andrew represented the holders of extreme opinions in the town of Guse-dub.

CHAPTER SECOND.

Of manufactures, trade, inventions rare,
 Steam-looms and looms, you'd know our boronch's share—
 'Tis small: we boast not those rich subj-cts here,
 Who hazard thre- ten thou-and pounds a-year;
 We've no huge buildings where incessant noise
 Is made by sp-ings and spindles, girls and boys;
 Where, 'mid such thundering sounds, the maiden's song
 Is 'Harmay in Uproar' all day long.

Crabbe.

PETER PROGRESS got but little schooling. He had been early taken away—his mother being a widow in poor circumstances—and sent to the Dub Mill, the only spinning-mill we had in these days. There were not wanting friends, who advised the widow 'no to send her laddie to the mill to get his baunes brokeu'; but, as they did not shew how otherwise he was to get his porridge, poor Peter was obliged to go. He afterwards served his apprenticeship as a mechanic at the same work, and was still employed there, being considered an excellent workman.

A visit he had lately paid to Glasgow formed an era in his life; he returned a devotee to mechanical science. Keenly sensible of his deficient education, he set about remedying the defect at once. He practised mechanical drawing, and laboured at the problems of Euclid in the evenings. I, of course, gave him what little assistance I could in these laudable endeavours. He had been formerly a reader of all sorts of books that came in his way, but now he seemed to devote his whole attention to his new studies, and was making rapid progress: but by and bye his attendance at the schoolhouse became less regular, and his attention less fixed when he came.

One evening I was reading by the fireside, and my good-wife opposite was busy with her needle, when our friend Peter made his appearance.

'Silence in the house,' he observed.

'Ay,' said Jenny, the 'dominie has been readin' this hour past, and keepin' it a' to himsel'; I canna get a word out o' his head.'

'Ah! but Peter she's not telling you what sort of a listener she is when I read to her; before I could read a long-winded title-page, she would most likely be away clattering among the crockery.'

'Hoot,' quoth Jenny, 'the household wark maun be mindit come o' the readin' what will. Women's wark's never done.'

'Very true, lass, I believe, for the gentle lady that married with the Moor had, while he was relating to her his travels' history, ever and anon to hie away to the kitchen,

when the house affairs did call her hence. I suppose it is a necessary hardship imposed on the women folks ; but, it must be allowed that they bear it with great equanimity.'

' Equal fiddlesticks,' cried Jenny. ' Do you hear him, Peter, how he slurs the female scct ?'

' Ay,' replied he, ' I hear him, but he kens very weel that woman has never had justice from man. He denies her education, then taunts her with ignorance ; he makes her a household drudge ; expects her to minister to all his wants—and yet have leisure, intelligence, and patience enough to become a delighted listener when he condescends to be in a communicative mood. The true criterion of civilization is the status of woman ; and, although we are far before eastern nations in that respect, we have still much to learn. We graciously concede some little honours and privileges to the sex, especially in maidenhood, but as it were per favour—for we plume ourselves on our gallantry, forgetting that we should be just before we are generous. But the scales are falling from our eyes, and the time is coming fast when woman will take her proper place, as the equal of man, his friend and companion—the instructor of his children—infusing into their young minds more precious nutriment than the milk that nourished their infancy. Then will woman repay a thousand-fold to posterity for the tardy justice we shall have rendered her, and men will wonder at the short-sighted policy that could keep in ignorance the very beings to whom, under heaven, they shall owe that greatest of all earthly blessings—a sound mind in a sound body.'

' Bravo, Peter,' I exclaimed. ' Surely the sea-born beauty or her brat has inspired you ; you are the champion of the sex, a veritable knight-errant, bound to do battle for all distressed damsels. Has Venus gifted you with love of the sex in general ; or has her little mischievous loon, Cupid, let fly an arrow at your heart, feathered with the rays of some 'bright particular star ;' or has some strong-minded woman poured her indignant feelings into your susceptible ears ; or,—Ho ! as I live, here comes your redoubtable opponent just in the nick o' time to save my wind.'

CHAPTER THIRD.

Even though vanquished, he could argue still.—Goldsmith.

' Sit down, Andrew Lag, and listen for your edification. Maybe Peter will go over his rhapsody again for your special benefit. It winna come, I'm thinkin' ; 'twas very like a set speech. Well, what think you, Andrew, of the supremacy of woman ?'

‘The supremacy o’ woman !’ quoth he. ‘My certy, I ken enough of that at hame. Give her tea and biscuits, and jellies—there’s no a jade in my house but turns up her nose at porridge—and give her new fangled falderrals o’ gowns, and jackets, and hoops, and a’ her ain will besides, yet will she no be pleased wi’ a’ that. The supremacy o’ woman, indeed—surely the deil was in Adam when he yielded to her !—has turned the world upside down ; and man, who was made to be lord of the earth, must now be subject to her, though he is ashamed to own it. We used to laugh at Mr and Mrs Caudle, but we might look nearer hame, and try to laugh at our own expense. I see Peter is primed and ready for reply, but he may keep his breath to cool his porridge ; what kens a bachelor like him about the nature o’ woman ?’

‘Weel, I’ll speak,’ said my goodwife Jenny. ‘Whiles I dinna ken what you are speakin’ aboot, but I should ken something o’ this ; and I tell you to your faces, ye twa auld railers, you’ve been muckle mair obligated to women than ever they were to you. Did nae your mithers bring you into the warld, and nurse and tend you, sick and weel, till you were grown men : and syne you got wives to drudge for you, and keep you hale, and clean, and comfortable the rest o’ your days ? Troth Martha Lag and Jenny Taws have been twa silly fules, to fling themselves awa the way they did. A wabster and a doonie, wha had naething but a pair o’ taws and a shuttle, hadden down by their wives, indeed ! I’ve but gotten twa or three gowns sin’ I was married, and that’s nearly forty year byegane ; and I’m thinkin’ that Martha Lag hasna gotten mony mair. I tell you, if it hadnna been for your wives there widna ane o’ you hae a house aboon your heads. The first time I gae doun to Pirnraw I’ll hae a cup o’ tea wi’ Martha and the lassies, and get a sight o’ their braw dresses. Biscuits and jellies ! ha, ha, ha !—porridge and sour milk, you mean ; and a pирн-wheel for a peanyiforty—ha, ha, ha !—it wad gar a horse laugh !’

‘Well done, Jenny,’ exclaimed Peter, ‘you’ve dumbfounded them baith ; look at them. Andrew is like an auld cuckoo clock run out. Wind him up again, Dominie. But I daresay you have both got plenty of it at this bout.’

‘Haud you your tongue about winding up,’ retorted Andrew, ‘auld Elder Garyne will wind you up shortly, or I’m mistaken. His daughter May is not a machine to be tended by heathen hands ; and a’ your high-flown compliments to womankind winna persuade the Auld Light that his daughter or his grandchildren wad be in good keepin’ with a son-in-law that talks of man and his machinery regenerating the world ; that speaks of a social millennium, and siclike profanity, as if neither grace nor Providence had

anything to do with the affairs of men. Give up the lassie, Peter ; her father is armed against you, baith temporally and spiritually ; and, as to proposing an alliance, he widna believe that you were a chosen vessel though you were to subscribe to the Solemn League and Covenant.'

'Oh, ho !' I cried. 'Blaws the wind from that airt ? that accounts for Euclid being somewhat neglected of late.'

'Ay,' said Andrew : 'he has forsaken the auld Greek and encountered an auld Trojan ; but I'm thinkin' the theologian will be more difficult to master than the geometrician, hard as he may be.'

'Never mind them, Peter,' interposed Jenny ; 'young lassies have a will o' their ain, as Gideon Garyne will maybe find out by and bye.'

'And of which marriage does not often deprive them,' I rejoined.

'Well,' said Peter, looking up from his slate, on which he appeared to have been engaged, 'if I were courting one of your daughters, Andrew, and if she and I had agreed to get married, do you think we would attach much importance to the opposition of an auld fule carle, that could so little appreciate the spirit of the present age that he preferred to walk the world in his great-grandfather's shoon, like a sleepwalker — a mere moving carcase, whose spirit was absent—far away in the past, hovering over "the rock and the tow" in some ancient clay biggin', or, at a muirland conventicle, brooding over the solemn abjurations and prophetic warnings of that saintly seer, the reverend Alexander Pedan ?'

'And do you imagine,' replied Andrew, 'that I would be eager to have a son-in-law who would treat me and my opinions with contempt, and teach my grandchildren to despise me ; who would still uphold his own words to be the outpourings of unimpeachable wisdom, and mine to be the senseless babbling of unmitigated folly ? If you and I are embodiments of extreme opinions ; or as the Dominie humorously styles us, representatives of old and young Gusedub, there is this difference, at least, in the way we arrive at conclusions : mine are drawn from history, tradition, and observation ; yours from observation and—what else ?—imagination.'

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact."

Ay, and the speculative pioneer who fancies he is delving to good purpose in the unknown future,

"He shall be king o' a' the three."

'Eh, Dominie,' exclaimed Peter, 'are your ears open ? Shakespeare, Burns, and Lag ! "Such names mingled!"'

"Saul also among the prophets!" "King o' a' the three!"—can anything from my prosaic month be worthy of utterance in the face of such a treeble authority? Be it known unto you, however, most honourable Andrew, sole surviving member—in the flesh—of this famous triumvirate, that a single text, as a single switch, may be bent and twisted awry. And be it also known unto you that your premises must be sound, else your deductions are worthless. The two grand sources from which you derive your conclusions are History and Tradition. History is an ancient drawwell, choked up with the *debris* of old ruins and mouldering skeletons. No use attempting to draw the pure element from such a sink. Tradition is a drumly puddle, oozing from this old charnel; from which puddle you have quaffed so long that your sluggish blood has become saturated with the decomposed matter of past ages, and your eyes have become so disordered that you see the world only through the scum of your stagnant helicon. Thus I have shown you—if you are not wholly blind—that your two grand fountains have only served to disqualify you for observation, which is the only source whence we can draw true knowledge of the world.'

'You remind me,' replied Andrew, 'of the celebrated Dr Southeby condemning the Latinised English that had come into vogue; and in the next sentence commanding the genuine Saxon element in our language. His two sentences were composed of the Latinised words that he condemned, all but three poor Saxons who could scarce hold up their heads among so many aliens, to represent their commended, yet neglected race. So your Philippic on history is mostly made up of ideas and words drawn from history, in condemning which you disclaim all the accumulated experience of mankind, which disclaimer would throw you back to the time

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

So much for your consistency. With regard to observation, which you say I am incapable of, does it afford you such information as you was dispensing the other day to some half-dozen gaping youngsters: that some chiel had invented a flying ship or something of the sort, and that you believed it would soon supersede steamboats, and that we might fly through the air at the rate of fifty, sixty, or even a hunder miles an hour; that we might mount up aboon the clouds when a storm was coming on, alighting, mayhap, on the Peak of Teneriffe, like a swallow on the weathercock of a steeple; then, wheeling about, strike into Africa, cross the great Desert of Sahara, and perhaps visit the wonderful city of Timbuctoo, and dine on roasted monkey; syne hameward over the pillars of Hercules; across the German Ocean, and alight in Gusedub to our supper? And didna

the gulpins swallow every word? Speak of the gull swallowing! that poor bird is much abused when we speak of his gorging powers in the comparative with human creatures. I believe the great condor that carried Sinbad the Sailor could swallow nothing like that.'

'Preserve us a!' ejaculated Jenny. 'The man's surely ravin'; vow but I never heard the like o' that afore.'

'It's a' true,' cried Andrew with great glee; 'and I'll let you hear mair o't. The land is to be ploughed by means of steam or electricity, or some power as yet unheard of, and there are to be great manufactories of sal-ammonia, or something o' the sort, that will make food for man and beast grow faster than it can be consumed. We are to burn water, and light up the world by means of our burns and pumpwells. We are to make artificial gold and diamonds superior to the nuggets and Koh-i-noors of Australia and India. We are to telegraph the price o' tatties and oatmeal every week to the Antipodes. We are to bring the moon so near by some grand telescope that we may read the signs aboon the shop doors,—that is to say, if there be such things in our satellite. And there is a state called clairvoyance in which we can leave our bodies in armchairs, and traverse the earth in the spirit like a flash of lightning, and, doubtless, after a little practice, wing our flight to the planetary bodies—skin over the rings of Saturn and the belts of Jupiter, and back again to our clay tenements that we left in our own world. It will be strange if the travelled spirit does not despise its cumbersome hamely garment!'

'Andrew Lag,' cried Jenny, 'are you out o' your judgment? You gar my very flesh creep.'

'He has but little judgment to lose,' said Peter. 'However, I'll appeal to the little that he has, and shortly, for it's getting late, and I fear we're trespassing on your patience.'

'One of the best gifts of God to man is the capacity for improvement, which distinguishes him from the brute creation. Was this great gift, which was given to man only in the world, given for no end? Was this talent—this talent of talents—given him that he might bury it in the earth? Certainly not. There is not a superfluous nerve or muscle in his frame, and shall the crowning attribute of his mind remain dormant and useless? The truth is, without it he could not exist; or if so, scarcely above the level of the brute. It was given for a purpose, like every other gift of God, and who shall limit its exercise but Him who gave it? Man knows not its boundary, but of this he may be assured, that he cannot go beyond it. It was long ere he made much progress in the exercise of his powers of adaptation. His own evil passions were perpetually retarding him, and often threw him back into almost savage

ignorance and impotency. Rude, barbarous conquerors destroyed the productions of art which they could not imitate. Accounting the arts of peace the causes of effeminity, they gloried in rooting out the fruits of experience, cultivated for ages, and in reducing advancing nations to the level of their own imbruted capacities. The wretched systems of government of the ancient demi-civilised nations—their absurd, superstitious creeds—the degrading influence of slavery—the shameless debauchery and tyranny of the rich and powerful—the poverty, ignorance, and turbulence of the masses—who were so contemned and despised by the great, that history records scarce a single expression of regret from a leader for shedding the blood of thousands of the *base vulgar*—all retarded the advance of civilisation till more barbarous hordes rushed in and swept it all away. Christianity proclaimed all men equal in the sight of God, and became the grand Magna Charta of mankind ; but its true spirit was little understood till the invention of printing scattered its blessings abroad upon the world. The press is the antidote of retrogression. Much of the art and knowledge of the old world is lost to us, but none of ours will be lost to posterity. The press is at work over the whole of the civilised world, and every discovery or improvement in art or science is now, as it were, indelibly imprinted on the human mind. We would not go back if we could ; go forward we must, and will ; and though some may be trodden down in the way, let us remember that there is no unmixed good in the world ; that, if progress must have its victims, retrogression must have its hecatombs.'

By this time the ten o'clock bell began to ring, and my friends rose to their feet. I proposed to discuss the subject some other evening, which was agreed to, and Jenny, on bidding good night, exclaimed—'Peter, you should ha'e been a minister !' 'Twas her *ne plus ultra* of admiration.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In others arms breathe out the tender tale —*Burns.*

IT was true, as Andrew had hinted, that Peter had cast a longing eye on Marjory Garyne. She was in his estimation the fairest, the gentlest, in short, the most lovable lass in all Gusedub. Though not strikingly beautiful, she was a handsome girl, with dark hair, and large mild black eyes, and a countenance expressive of calm repose, unless when lighted up with the sweetest of smiles. Peter had no patience with those silly things that scream, and giggle, and chatter in-

cessantly about bonnets, ribbons, frocks, and sweethearts ; that run to doors and windows to see Miss Hoops pass in her new dress, and comment upon it at the top of their voices. He had made good use of his opportunities for cultivating his mind and improving his taste, and could find but little pleasure in talking nonsense to such animated dolls. Perhaps the quiet placid demeanour of Marjory, or May, as she was called, might have been partly owing to the very strict discipline under which she had been brought up ; yet the two younger children, Annie and Willie, were noisy enough —that is to say, in their father's absence. Their mother, it is true, was good natured and indulgent, and often screened them from his displeasure, of which she stood not a little in awe herself. 'Weel kens the mouse when the cat's out o' the house' was an apothegm peculiarly applicable to the household of Gideon Garyne. If any singing, daffing, or chatting had been going on in his absence it was instantly hushed as soon as his foot-fall was heard on the stairs. 'There's your father,' uttered in an undertone by their mother, reached every ear, and ended for the time every dispute. Yet he did not use the strap often ; but when he did flog, there was no shamming in the matter. Calm, deliberate, inflexible in trying, judging, and punishing, he ruled by fear, and by fear alone. He gave little praise to those that did well, considering the smallest modicum of commendation as a flattering of self-righteousness. Any expression of endearment used towards a child he held to be derogatory to his paternal dignity, and a breach of the spirit of the first commandment. The words, 'My Dear,' might have blistered his lips for aught he knew, as he had never uttered them. He considered such to be pernicious to the child, as tending to allay the wholesome fear of punishment, and induce hopes of indulgence, all which was inconsistent with proper discipline in a Christian family.

Such was his theory, and he acted up to it ; indeed it was written in his face, the chief expression of which might be characterised by the little word 'grim.' He seldom smiled, and never laughed. Yet was this man an affectionate father —though his children might not know it,—and a good, if not a fond, husband ; but what sort of a lover he had been his history saith not. He was an elder of his church—the Original Secession, commonly called 'Auld Light'—and, I need not say, one of the strictest of his sect. His politics were subservient to his religious views ; as he looked upon material prosperity as both effect and cause of our turning aside from the worship of the true God, and giving our whole hearts to the God of this world—Mammon,

"The least erected spirit that fell from heaven."

Such is a rough sketch of Gideon Garyne, master boot and

shoemaker, who lived in his own house above his shop, with a pretty large garden behind, at the top of which was a pretty little summer-house—known to our friend Peter—in a flowery nook, that was tended by the fair hands of May Garyne. Now so it was, that close by this little arbour there was a door in the garden wall, which was fastened inside with a wooden bar. Outside of this door two or three steps led down to the 'Dub burn, which, as it is now defiled by bleachfield, mill, and tanyard, might be called Filthydub. It was then a clear stream, and trouts were caught in the mill-dam, where even eels cannot live now-a-days. Peter, for reasons best known to himself, sometimes preferred this garden-door to the more public entrance from the street. He would walk down the burnside of an evening, and, if not particularly observed, cross the burn by stepping-stones, and enter the garden. The door—by good luck, shall I say?—being always unbarred when he came; and, still more fortunate, he would not be long in the summer-house when May would be seen earnestly observing her flowers, and of course would step into the bower to rest herself; and would be surprised, no doubt, when she found herself in the arms of her lover. Just so they met on one particular night, when May exclaimed—

‘Gently now, Pate—that’ll do, you loon. Be quiet now; there’s Annie.’

And sure enough her little sister had come up to the summer-house, unobserved.

‘Come here, Annie,’ said Peter.

She came shyly, with a roguish look in her glancing een.

‘You are not a tell-tale Annie. When you grow as big as your sister, May, and get a sweetheart you would not like anybody to tell when he kissed you.’

‘Ah, but I wadna let him kiss me.’

‘Tut, maybe you would; you dinna ken yet.’

May took her little curly head in her arms, and whispered something in her ear.

‘I’m awa’, then,’ she cried, bounding away; but suddenly stopping, she came back demurely, and said to Peter—

‘You may kiss her as often as you like.’

And with a merry laugh she vanished.

‘Senseless little thing,’ said May.

‘Never heard better sense in my life,’ said Peter, putting his arms round her neck.

‘Now Pate, I’ll run to the house, too; if you dinna behave yourself.’

After such a terrible threat, there is no doubt that our friend behaved himself.

‘Now, my lad,’ said May, ‘I maun tell you that I’m no pleased wi’ you.’

—He knew she harboured no great displeasure, as there was

nothing like a frown in the fair young face looking up into his.

‘And how is my lassie displeased wi’ her ain lad?’ he inquired.

‘How could you be so foolish as gie Willie the pack o’ cards, when you ken how my father dislikes everything like gamblin’. I’m aye in terror lest they shouldna be keepit out o’ his sight.’

‘Weel, May, it was foolish of me, I allow; but you ken Willie’s our Mercury—not a messenger of heathen gods, but of poor mortals, and entitled to their poor gratitude; so when he came for ‘The Gentle Shepherd’ to you, I wished to look out something that might please him, and on rummagin’ an old drawer, as ill luck would have it, up turned a pack of cards. ‘O,’ cried Willie, ‘I wad like the cards to play for nits when Yule comes.’ What could I do? I had not the heart to refuse to pleasure my little friend with such a trifle, though I had some misgivings at the time that it was an unchancy gift.’

‘Maybe it will do nae ill,’ said May. ‘Willie and Annie are often p’ayin’ wi’ them in the house, but they hide them when father comes in; they’ll soon tire o’ them, and I’ll get them put out o’ the way syne. But there’s anither thing that I’ve against you, lad.’

‘What’s that, lass?’

‘Oh, spier! as if you didna ken. Yon daft-like sang you sent.’

‘Daft-like, Maysie! You are my Muse you ken, so dinna disparage your ain inspiration.’

‘Weel, it is bonnie, but it’s sae fu’ o’ flattery; and then the hinmost verse.’

‘It’s truth, May; and that’s the only beauty of it; but what faut has my fair critic to the hinmost verse; is it this?’

‘You’ll dandle on your knee
Each pledge of love that—

Here there was a veto, in the shape of a little hand upon Peter’s mouth; but, as there is no veto put upon my pen, I’ll leave the young pair to their delectable converse, look out my copy of Peter’s first love-lilt, and transcribe it in the ‘Record’ for the benefit of posterity. Here it is, all but the hinmost verse.

THE LASSIE AT THE SCHULE.

O weel I mind the time, May,
I had a waukin’ dream
About a lassie at the schule,
And watched her comin’ hame:
And watched her comin’ hame, May,
But how I couldna tell,
For I was but a ‘prentice loon,
And hardly kenna’d mysel’.

But as the year gaed round, May,
 You grew a maiden shy,
 And I could read the hidden book
 That in my heart did lie;
 But there was one within your breast
 That yet was sealed to me,
 For it was clasped and concealed
 By maiden modestie.

But mind you o' the night, May—
 I'll mind it evermair—
 I got you trystit down the loan,
 And taud my secret there?
 Sweet thoughts, concealed for mony a day,
 Were breathed in whispers syne;
 O sweet first love, 'twas a' we had,
 But that was mine and thine.

No doubt May had some little cause for finding fault with the 'hinnost verse.' It looks very like an after-thought tagged on to the tail of the ditty to provoke a little bashful criticism on the part of the fair inspirer. Such hopes and wishes, however natural, are rather understood than expressed between lovers. They are such selfish creatures—so entirely engrossed with themselves—that the living world around them seems scarcely worth their attention, so we need not expect them to waste their precious breath in much talk about the next generation until the 'coming event casts its shadow before.' There was, indeed, a coming event of another kind that cast as yet scarcely a perceptible shadow; so the lovers heeded it not, happy in their mutual love and perfect confidence. When I recall scenes like these to my remembrance, I seem to live over again certain hours of my life that our Burns calls 'golden hours,' and to repeat certain passages of an old tale concerning a certain old dominie who was once young; but soon something recalls me to the worldliness of the present time, and I exclaim, 'Pooh, nonsense!' Ah! is it not the old fox crying 'sour grapes'?

Mrs Garyne knew, of course, that Peter and May were courting; he went into the house sometimes, where he was always welcome; but the old man happened somehow to be in the shop on these occasions. Once or twice, indeed, he had come in upon his uninvited guest, who felt, as well as the lass, a little awkward, no doubt. However, Gideon was not uncivil, though he gave but cold greeting, and little encouragement to return. But Peter was a good customer of long standing, for, when a 'prentice loon,' he had found out that May was a loesome lassie, and about the same time he discovered that her father was a capital shoemaker. So, as he had the entree to the shop, and was a young man of unexceptionable character, the elder had no feasible excuse for forbidding him the house. He knew what attracted him, though he forbore to speak of it. Probably he thought that, like other youthful fancies, it would be short-lived. He had no idea how many pairs of boots he had made for his intended

son-in-law. Peter was not one exactly to his mind. He would have preferred a man of more ardent piety—one belonging to his own persuasion ; but knew as much of the world as made him aware that to insist on such qualifications in every young man that approached his daughter would make him ridiculous, even in the eyes of men of his own sect. So he temporised, like many a wiser man, till he should have something more tangible to take hold of. When one is lying in wait for come cause that may be sufficient to account for breaking with a friend or acquaintance, he does not commonly wait long, as a very small occasion will serve his purpose. ‘The wish is father to the thought,’ is a true saying, and it is equally true that the same wish is grandfather to the occasion. Meanwhile I will leave the elder to his surveillance, that I may not forestal events, but set them down in due order, according to the time of their occurrence, that this important chronicle—‘The Gusedub Record’—may be no misnomer.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,
 The positive pronounce without dismay,
 Where others toil with philosophic force,
 Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
 Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
 And gains remote conclusions at a jump.—*Cowper.*

ONE evening after the love-episode that I have recorded—for in the great epic prose poem of human life, whatever poets and lovers may say to the contrary, love is but an episode—Peter was beside me poring over his self-imposed task. When he began to show signs of relaxation in his study, I began to rally him on his reported attachment to the Elder’s daughter.

‘How are you getting on,’ I enquired, ‘in your lighter studies under your fair young professor, May Garyne. I had seen you talking often, but paid no attention to it, until the other evening when Andrew turned it over in rather a serious light. These little flirtations become serious affairs sometimes, even when nothing serious is contemplated ; so remember the fable of the boys and the frogs, and consider that though it may be sport to you, it may be rather disagreeable for May, poor lassie. You know that Gideon is no joker.’

‘And I am no joker,’ said Peter, ‘with the feelings and happiness of a good girl. You ought to know me better, Dominie. I may now as well tell you at once, that I am most serious. I love May as she ought to be loved ; and you—who have known her all her days—may judge if that can be

a light love. It is not of yesterday, I can assure you, though it has but lately become the subject of gossip. I have some reason to think that we have been watched for some time past; indeed I learned as much from Lizzie Lag; and that accounts for the way her father bantered me about the Elder's daughter the other night. I wonder we have escaped the gossips so long; but I have been, till lately at least, very cautious—more for her sake than my own, of course;—though even man does not like his deepest feelings stirred up to the surface by idle hands, however coolly he may see fit to take the passing jest. But here comes our friend Andrew. Say nothing about this matter in his hearing; he would lug it in on every occasion that offered, as a little diversion to enliven the argument.'

'He's speaking to Jenny at the door,' I observed. 'Here he comes. How are you this night, Andrew?'

'Weel, thank you, Dominie. How is my friend Peter behaving?'

'Like a man,' said my pupil. 'I have now got an auld head on my young shoulders, and mean to set myself up as an example to the ancients of Gusedub. Away with modesty. I have been almost lost for want of impudence.'

'Weel,' replied Andrew, 'that is about the most impudent speech that ever I remember to have heard. You may well cry—"Away with modesty."'

'Well,' I interposed, 'it would appear that modesty is becoming a rare quality among our young folks, whatever may be the cause.'

'Cause,' exclaimed Andrew, 'why it is patent to everybody that has eyes to see. A boy serves an apprenticeship at the factory to learn impudence, before he goes to learn a trade. Look at him, strutting along the street, with a pipe in his mouth, puffing away with an air of precocity that is absolutely disgusting; or observe him and his companions cursing and swearing, brawling and fighting, and rushing against old people on the pavement, who, if they reprimand them, get nothing but impudence in reply. If there is a poor half-witted or deformed creature, or any harmless, helpless being, with some odd peculiarities about him, or her, you may be sure that that unfortunate is selected as an especial victim of persecution. Well might Edmund Burke exclaim—"The age of chivalry is gone," for nothing that is good, or beautiful, or venerable is now respected by the rising generation.'

"I care for nobody; no not I,
Since nobody cares for me."

The burthen of the Miller o' Dee should be the motto on the forehead of the time; for recklessness is the characteristic on which—above all others—our young hopefuls pride

themselves. They are ashamed to seem ashamed of any misconduct, and so they brave it out with consummate impudence. Their fathers are now “old boys” or “governors,” their mothers “old wives,” and their masters “corks.” The other day I reproved a little undergrown manikin for smoking on the street, whereupon the monkey retorted, “Does your mother know you’re out, old fellow?” Such is a sample of the behaviour of the young fry at the present day. You say this is an age of progress; ay, indeed, progress in all manner of wickedness.

‘Admitting,’ said Peter, ‘that there is too much truth in what you allege, yet you should consider that our vices follow fashion: we have our fashionable vices as well as fashionable dresses. Our fathers were free from many of our faults, and we are free from not a few of theirs. We are not so dirty, foul-mouthed, bigoted, intolerant, unfeeling, cruel, revengeful, and bloodthirsty as our ancestors. The vices of the present are clear, glaring, under your eyes; but those of the past are softened in the retrospect.

“Tis distance lends enchantment to the view.”

Distance in time, as in space, has the same effect. Now Andrew, we must endeavour to avoid comparison. I mean it should not influence our judgment of past times. Every age should be tried by its own light. We cannot do this thoroughly; it requires an effort of the mind to make an approximation to it; for in reading of the doings of some historical personages, we can scarcely restrain our feelings of indignation, unconscious at the time that we are judging them by our own more humane standard. Now this is scarcely fair, and yet it cannot easily be avoided. But in judging between the state of society at the present day, and that which prevailed at any former period, we are under no such difficulty, as we have to do only with the different states of civilisation. However, to extol the past, and decry the present, is a fair challenge of comparison between them; so let us review your “auld lang syne” for a moment. When we think of some of our modern discoveries that are so useful, and save so much labour, and are at the same time so obvious and simple to us now, we are surprised that they should have been overlooked for so many ages; and yet it took many thousand years to introduce our lucifer matches and letter envelopes into the world. How many oxen do you think now might be required to tread out corn for the British empire, nay, even for the city of London? How much labour would be required to grind it into meal and flour in things like pepper mills, driven by men’s hands? How many millers must have been employed to supply Old Rome—by some historians supposed to contain six or seven millions of inhabitants in the time of Augustus.

Why, one would think there must have been employment for a great number of her slaves in this branch of industry alone. It would appear that all that work was done in the city, for we read of her rulers in times of scarcity or turbulence seeking popularity by dispensing corn gratuitously from the public granaries—*never meal or flour*. Now, let us consider how the poor managed with this corn. Slaves were of course fed by their masters, but it is clear that there was a vast number of poor freemen—a sort of lazaroni—who clamoured for corn, and who cannot be supposed to have all had the means of turning it into flour; consequently there must have been large establishments where those people could get their corn ground; paying for the operation in money, or—likely from their poverty—in kind. Imagine what sort of factories those must have been. What numbers of slaves must have been employed turning the cranks of the flour mills. This irksome task was no doubt assigned as penal labour to prisoners; for more than a thousand years before the Augustan age of Rome, Samson was employed, as Milton has it,

"Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,"

grinding corn in the prison.'

'Stop a moment,' said Andrew. 'You are going on as usual asking questions and starting suppositions, all the time making out a bad case for yourself. If Rome always contained a vast populace, idle, poor, and turbulent, what would have been the consequence if all these imaginary millers of yours had been superseded and thrown idle by the invention of machinery? Why, man, the great city would have gnawed her own vitals. She would not have had to wait hundreds of years for the Goths and Vandals to complete her destruction. There is no better safeguard for a State than to keep all the people, or as many as possible, employed. The old Romans had more sense than invent machinery to do men's work. They knew that idle people are dangerous, and showed their appreciation of that fact by employing their armies in public works, to keep them out of mischief. It was reserved for us, that boast of our higher civilisation, to take away men's employment, and compel them to starve submissively. We allow labour no rights until it accumulates into capital, and then how very tender we become about its protection; *vested rights* must be made secure ere any innovation be allowed to take its course. On the other hand, a young man may purchase a trade with seven years' labour, and find, at the end of that time, his "occupation gone," but find neither compensation nor sympathy. Is that true or not?'

'It is true,' replied Peter. 'Accumulated skill is the only unprotected capital we have. But remember that it is

an ancient grievance, and those that suffer from it now don't think at all of the sufferers in times past. But all the amount of suffering consequent of new inventions is but an atom compared with the amount of enjoyment attained. Not to mention the vast amount of hand labour superseded by water power, let us take the later invention of printing. It is calculated to have thrown seven thousand copiers of MS. out of employment in Paris alone. Consider the number that must have been deprived of their means of living ; men, too, whose hands and habits unfitted them for the rougher kinds of labour. We know that those men felt aggrieved, and gave expression to their feelings much the same as men so circumstanced have often done since. But they were more cunning ; they enlisted the sympathies of the masses, who could neither read written nor printed books, by appealing to their superstition, and incited them to destroy the machinery of the new art, by denouncing it as the invention of the devil, and its professors as magicians who had sold their souls to the evil one for this devilish art, and were served by his imps according to the fearful paction. Hence the phrase 'printer's devil' that is in use at this day. Faust had his presses and types destroyed, and had to flee for his life, and the innovation appeared for a time to be crushed. But vain the attempt ; and if the people of that age, with the giant Superstition at their backs, could not crush this grand invention, how much more vain must be all attempts in modern times to retard improvement, with the all-powerful press at its back ! But far greater evils than loss of employment to writers followed the invention of printing. By the spread of knowledge it aroused the rage and the fear of despotic bigots, and then commenced the war between the powers of light and darkness. The flames of persecution were kindled, which were not quenched but with seas of blood ; and even yet in some parts of Europe the embers lie hot among the smouldering ashes. But those terrible consequences must not be imputed to light, but darkness ; and those that loved darkness rather than light. Now, this brings me to a question or two that I would ask you. How many does the press now employ directly and indirectly, for every one that it superseded ? How many the steam-engine ? These questions are unanswerable, but if they produce reflection they will not have been asked in vain. I would ask one more, one that can and ought to be answered. Would we willingly forego our Bibles, our histories, and all our excellent books, whose titles are as familiar to us as 'household words,' would we willingly remain ignorant of all that is going on in the world—have no newspapers, magazines, and journals to instruct and amuse us because the introduction of printing was followed by great calamities ?

could we justify its suppression because it has been sometimes prostituted to evil purposes ? Certainly not ; though our best blessings may be abused, let us be grateful for the use. While we read our books and papers by the fireside without fear, and without reproach, let us sometimes remember the price that our forefathers paid for the privilege we now enjoy.'

'True, Peter,' replied Andrew, 'but not the whole truth. You entirely overlook the difference between the gradual introduction of inventions in former times, and the rapidity with which they start into operation in our day. Formerly an invention was the secret of the inventor—a family secret—transmitted as a precious heirloom from father to son. Or it was the property of a corporation, and was as jealously guarded as the mysteries of masonry. Those persons monopolised their own secrets for their own interest—and quite proper as a reward for their ingenuity. They had the cream of the market, but did not drive all others out of it. Andrea Ferrara swords and Cremona fiddles did not fill all Europe, and drive all other sorts out of existence. Those that purchased an improved article paid a little more for it, and never missed the additional penny. Six or eight yards of shirting will last me a year. Suppose I paid three half-pence more per yard, it would cost me a farthing more per week, and it would more than double the weaver's wages. I don't wish it so cheap. I don't wish to be benefited by fractions at the expense of my neighbour's wages. Yet such is the effect of most modern improvements, because all these, in spite of patents, are whisked over the world at railway speed ; with competition driving them on, crying "Deil tak' the himmost."

'Machinery and competition,' said Peter, 'your two great bugbears, with all their faults, have furnished our houses with comforts, conveniences, and luxuries, that are altogether unrecognisable, for the simple reason that we never felt the want of them. Competition is the spur that goads us on sometimes with more haste than wisdom, yet without it we would have no onward motion of our own, but merely

" Roll round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks and stones and trees."

We should relapse into the *vis inertiae*; and vegetate, as our fathers did, on sowens and kale brose—as much of greens, and as little of meal as possible to live on—grotts and greens again, with porridge on Sunday ; and on Yule morning—oh luxury of the old time !—we should break our fast on fat brose. Then for clothing we should have life-lasting suits of wincey and plaiding, washed with liquid manure in lieu of soap, most excellent preserves for vermin. The itch would be our bosom friend. Our houses would be damp,

unwholesome hovels, with the rain descending through the thatch, with here and there dishes set to catch the inkey drops falling from the smoky roof. We should have no light in winter evenings, but the blaze of whins or heather, or pieces of fir-roots kept for candle. Women would spin, and men would yawn till their early bed-time. Life would be divided, as of yore, between labour and sleep. Such a life would be but a living death. But here comes Mrs Taws from the kitchen, in good time to close our endless discussion.'

'Weel,' said Jenny, 'I've been sittin' sewin' there wi' the door ajee, and heard your crack. That skreed o' yours, Pe'er, about kail brose and plaiden is a' nonsense. In my father's house, forty year syne, there was aye meal in the tub, and hams hingin' on the kipples; aye cheese and butter in the pantry, and chuckies in the henhouse. If ony strangers came to see us we could mak a meal at ony time without gaun frae hame about it. Now a warkman's wife in Gusedub, in sic a case, maun rin to Johnie Barebanes for a pund o' steak—and glad to get it as a favour at double price; syne to Joseph Jimpys for a pund o' goudie cheese, and half-a-dozen o' eggs, or maybe a slice o' ham, as saut as Lot's wife. When she gets hame in a flutter wi' her provisions, winna the strange folks feel vexed and awkward, and say they were sorry she should put herself to so much trouble; whiles she wad be obliged to tell a lee, and declare that it was nae trouble at a'; and after sweating o'er the fire makin' them ready, what credit wad she hae o' her eatables? She wad press them to eat. They wad say they were eatin' hearty, though they couldna get the tough grissle chawed to gae o'er their throats, yet praisin' it a' the time. She wad be sensible that they were tellin' confounded lees for civility's sake; while they would be wishin' in their hearts that they hadnna entered the door. Ay, and wad be nae sooner gane than the puir woman would cry— "Sorrow tak them! What brought them here? If I had kenn'd I wad hae been awa, and the door lockit." That comes o' livin' frae hand to mouth. As for the vermin you spak about, I never saw sic a thing as a bug till I was a married wife, and—

'Hout, tout, woman,' I exclaimed. 'Do you mean to insinuate that I introduce'd you to that sort of cattle. I have forborne to interrupt my friends in the discussion, as I meant to sum up their arguments and prove both guilty of exaggeration, but that oracular speech of yours has knocked everything out of my head. There's our friends on their feet. Well, good night, sirs. The bottom of the well where truth is said to lie has been stirred a little, but, for all that, you are still Auld and Young Gusedub.'

CHAPTER SIXTH.

The course of true love never did run smooth.—Shakespeare.

GIDEON GARYNE, as was hinted, did not have long to wait for a decent excuse to break with our friend Peter, nor was he backward in acting upon it in the most decided manner. It chanced that May—always apprehensive that the cards he had given to Willie might be discovered by their father—thinking that the boy's new fangled fancy for 'catch-the-tens' had now cooled down, quietly slipped the offensive articles into her work-box to be out of sight, hoping that after a little while they would be forgotten. In this it appeared she had reckoned too fast, for the moment he missed them he became as eager about card-playing as ever; and as May had tried to get them from him before, he naturally blamed her for putting them out of the way. The consequence—as might have been expected—was clamorous demands to deliver up the bone, or rather pack, of contention, and that immediately. May seeing that it was of no use resisting the demand, and fearing that her father might hear his noisy outcries, opened the box and gave him the cards. Willie, however, not content with the recovery, plunged his hand in the box, and by way of retaliation, seized a folded paper and endeavoured to escape with it, when May caught hold of him to recover it, and was dragged into the passage. Unfortunately at this moment Gideon—probably hearing the scuffle—opened the door of his workshop, and demanded the reason of such unseemly conduct. Willie was instantly released, to be as quickly recaptured by a less gentle hand; for, oh horror! there lay on the floor the 'ten of hearts' and the 'jack of clubs' before the astounded Elder of the Auld Lights. May had retreated to her room, where she stood trembling, turning red and white by turns, while her brother—after picking up the tell-tale cards by order—was ushered into the kitchen, followed by judge, jury, prosecutor, and witness, all in the person of his father. He shut the door; then sternly fixing his eyes on the boy, asked him, 'Where did you get these? Answer me truly on your peril.'

Willie stammered out the truth. The old man threw the cards on the fire, and grimly watched the crackling blaze.

'And this,' holding up the paper.

'It's May's,' said Willie, blubbering.

Without the least compunction the patriarchal despot adjusted his spectacles, and, without moving a muscle of his face, read over Peter's amatory verses, which May seeing through the half-shut door of the closet, she was

like to drop down with confusion. That terrible old man, her father, was the last person in the world she would have liked to have read those lines. He crumpled the paper in his hand, and seemed about to commit it also to the flames, but turning toward his wife, who had sunk on a chair by the window, and sat gazing at him in consternation, said—‘Woman, behold the fruit of your sinful indulgence !’ ‘Tis said ‘misfortunes never come single ;’ nonsense, they come in single file treading on each other’s heels, as bad as if they came all abreast.

At this unchancy moment the Elder saw the tempter pass the window, not in the serpentine form, but in the shape of our friend Peter ; and, striding towards the door, opened it, threw the unhallowed verses at the amazed intruder, and shut the door in his face. Then stepping to the closet he grasped May by the arm, leaving his finger-marks for a while on the wrist, led her to the window, pointed to her retreating lover, and hissed in her ear—‘ Him or me ; gie up him or me.’ Throwing her arm from him, he paced the floor for a few minutes, then turned to the little culprit and said—‘ You knew you was doin’ contrary to my will, but now hear my especial command. Never henceforth, from this hour, bring any cards or dice into my house ; no, nor handle them anywhere, while you’re under my control. Now, remember.’ With lowering brow, and eyes flashing from under their pent-house arches, he glanced at each alternately. May was sobbing, with her hands over her face ; Willie was standing with the tears on his cheeks—not the tears of repentance ; their mother, whose habitual deference to her husband had kept her silent as yet, was evidently losing her equanimity. He asked—‘ Is there anything else of that man’s in my house ?’ No answer. He repeated the question. Still no answer. He went to the closet, where he never used to go, and after turning everything topsy turvy, reappeared in the kitchen with some books in his hand, which he commenced to examine. The first he opened was ‘The Gentle Shepherd’—‘a play book,’ he groaned. The next was ‘Douglas, or the Noble Shepherd.’ These he deliberately threw on the fire. Opening another, ‘Old Mortality’, ‘Ha !’ cried he, I have heard of that malignant lying novel, that praises Claverhouse, the bloody persecutor, and mocks and vilifies the men who yielded up their lives for the truth of the Gospel. He threw it likewise on the fire, and pressed it down emphatically with the heel of his boot. In the meantime May had sprung up and vainly tried to save it, crying ‘O father, father ! it’s no mine, nor his ; its a library book.’ He kept her aloof with his arm, till he had buried the book in the fire, then suddenly wheeling about, threw her from him with such violence that she fell on the corner of

dresser, and sank down on the floor. The sight of the pale panting prostrate girl staggered him; his heart smote him for his harshness and cruelty to one who had been ever gentle to all. But spiritual pride and natural affection had but little time to contend for the mastery within him, when the mother, who instinctively had sprung towards her child, and was supporting her head on her knee, turned on him, now transformed from the patient sheep, as it were, to the lioness guarding her young.

‘Monster!’ she cried. ‘Better murder us a’. You an elder o’ the kirk! Waur than a drunkard that doesna ken what he’s doin’! This is your love and charity and tender mercy; this is your Christian example; this is the fruit o’ your family worship and prayer meetings! Out o’ my sight, man: I wish I had never seen your face!’

Then the thunder-cloud burst and dissolved in tears. He stood motionless, astounded at the storm he had raised, half-conscious that he had given the rein to his own bad passions under pretence of doing God’s will. He had brooded long over a supposed grievance, and the long pent-up malignity, when the liberating occasion came, had fairly overmastered his self-command. With his lips quivering with the contending feelings of anger and compunction, he went out, slamming the door after him so violently that the house shook. He had never been so braved by his wife before, yet he uttered not a word. ‘Conscience makes cowards of us all.’ Unhappy he that went; unhappy they that remained. But moments of passion are fathers to years of unhappiness.

Parental authority is a sacred trust, how often abused! Children, if oppressed, have no appeal. In cases of extreme cruelty that may be brought under the cognisance of the law by friends or neighbours, and, from their unwillingness to interfere in other people’s family affairs, these are but rare,—who shall warrant that such parents, after being punished, shall not return to their families with vengeful feelings, and with greater cunning and caution to evade the law? Who shall warrant that their children will not be worse treated in secret. But there are many ways of torturing children without beating them. Some parents do it under pretence of duty, and some under a mistaken sense of duty. It is well for them that their mothers are generally tender and indulgent, and mediate between them and their fathers, when the little patriarchal kings are inclined to be too despotic; but this mediation is a delicate matter, and requires judicious application. It is quite possible for a hard father to be a good man. His uncompromising hostility to vice, his love of virtue, his anxiety for the welfare of his children, both here and hereafter, may incline him to severity. His very conscientiousness

may incline him to be a strict disciplinarian ; and when the second in command will not enforce his orders, but rather winks at disobedience, and screens the offenders from punishment, it is vexatious indeed, and very mischievous ; but it would not be very unwise of the governor, perhaps, to wink a little himself sometimes. But the worst domestic tyranny is that of the strong-minded woman—that *rara avis* who prides herself on the training of her children. She is an ever-present terror. She will whip a little fellow for being cross. Perhaps he feels uneasy in his internal economy ; no matter, he gets it—the whipping I mean—and bawls lustily of course. Then she puts him down on his seat with a thump, and orders him to sit mute and motionless. He tries hard, poor little naughty, to keep down his sobs, but he can't, and so he gets another wallop. This is worse than to knock a man down, and then to kick him for falling. Another time she will punish the image of his father for being noisy, for giving vent to the natural buoyancy of his spirits, which she tolerates for a time, till she gets tired of it, and then he gets it, poor little merry man, that he may learn to be grave betimes. But don't be surprised though you see him at the door a little after, with cheeks besmeared with jelly or treacle, devouring the *amende honorable* which he has had from his strong-minded mother under the substantial disguise of a sweet morsel. Youth requires restraint, but how much or how little in every case it is almost impossible to know. Children may be spoiled with too little, as with too much indulgence. Indeed they seldom get even-handed justice, but are indulged or restrained as the mercury in the domestic barometer rises or falls, especially with mamma. But I had better say no more on this subject ; for I have been censured for too great leniency, and also for too great severity in my vicarious empire—the school. Let us remember that in the difficult task of training the young, the wisest may err. But all sensible people now are agreed that all gentle means should first be tried, and only when these fail should we have recourse to flogging—the *dernier resort*. And if at any time we should be unjust toward them, let us confess, and apologise as we would to others. We will gain more in love than we will lose in dignity. They know our shortcomings in that way, whether we own them or not. If we don't we can't expect them to own theirs, or to have confidence in our justice. A victory over this narrow-mindedness is a beautiful example to set before a child, besides the pleasure we have in doing our duty, on failing in any point, making all the atonement in our power. If they learn to practice this proud humility, it will win for them the good will of others all their days.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
Through many a weary way,
But never, never can forget
The love o' life's young day.

Motherwell.

You don't mean to say that any of the ribs are broken ? I said to Peter, who was pacing my room in great indignation.

'Broken,' he exclaimed. 'Worse, I believe ; torn from the backbone, perhaps. The savage ! The poor thing fainted while they were getting her to bed. Her aunt told me she can't draw a breath without torture. To have my lamb in the power of such a wolf. Even John Balfour, of Burley, could not have so savagely assaulted an innocent child. Dearly as I love her, I could not, even for her sake, spare one particle of regard for such a clod of the covenant-compound of ass, wolf, and crocodile.'

'Peter,' I said, 'keep your temper. Don't rush into the fault you condemn.'

'I have cause,' he replied, 'great cause. He had none. If she had been of age I would have married her in spite of him. I would have gone this very night to the session-clerk and booked our names.'

'You forget,' I said, 'that the lassie's consent is necessary ; and that her father might forbid the banns.'

'She should have been a bride ere she knew of it. Her consent would have been mine then, though reluctantly, perhaps. If Gideon had dared to forbid the banns I should have handed him over to the Procurator-Fiscal for assault. But I am talking nonsense. May is not nineteen yet ; so we must wait. Two years is a long time. But I have no doubts of her, nor of myself. I had once thoughts of going to England, to Manchester, but could not tear myself away from her. Now I think I'll go ; yes, when she gets better I'll go, and work there during these two weary years. I could not stay at home and forbear all intercourse. She could not refuse to meet me ; and I know she, poor soul, would be unhappy ; perpetually reproaching herself for her disobedience. She would be constantly persecuted on my account. It must not be.'

'Well,' I replied, 'I daresay, on the whole, it may be your best plan. But why go so far as Manchester ? Wouldn't Dundee or Glasgow do ?'

'Distance matters little in these railway days. I should like to see mechanics on a gigantic scale ; and, besides, I should like to see England. I will think of it, however, and let you know when I have made up my mind.'

‘I shall miss you very much, Peter, and so will your old opponent, Andrew.’

‘O, I shall send him a bone to pick now and then,’ said Peter. ‘He will not become modernised for want of opposition. I will find Old Gusedub on my return. I will miss my friends sadly, being among strangers. However, we must look for separations in this world. I will go now and look all the circumstances of the case fully in the face.’

A fortnight after this conversation Peter was on his way to Manchester. May was able to go over to her aunt’s to bid him good-bye. The good woman discreetly left them to themselves.

He took her in his arms, kissed her, and said—‘How could your father have the heart? Why, he is a perfect barbarian.’

‘Hush,’ she said, ‘he is my father, you ken. I am sure he is sair vexed for the accident; for it was an accident. He has shewn me mair kindness than ever he did before; and, indeed, he has been kinder to us a’.

‘Weel, May, I’ll not say a word against him for your sake, dear. Indeed, I am not blameless in the matter. Do you mind you warned me of the danger of those confounded cards?’

‘I had aye a dread o’ them being seen,’ she replied; and it was my fear that brought it about; but I’m no sorry now that it happened, for it will maybe turn to our good yet.’

‘Weel, lassie, I hope so. If your father consent next sumner, we’ll be married; and if not—’

‘Such a lad I have,’ said May. ‘He doesna seem to think that my consent is of ony signification.’

‘I would have no denial from those saucy lips of yours, lassie; so you needna say no, unless you want me to kiss you till you say ay.’

‘Might not that tempt me to say no?’ she inquired slyly.

‘I will be obliged, you tempting gipsy, whether I would or no,’ he said, suiting the action to the word. ‘And now listen till I tell you my plan, and give me your consent to it like a sensible girl.’

Here he told her what he mentioned to me—his intention to go to England for a time, and his reasons for it. She was confounded: and combated his resolution by holding out hope of her father’s consent being speedily obtained.

‘Shall I ask his consent now?’ he said.

‘No, no,’ she replied, ‘not yet; I’m o’er young. That would be a good reason for his refusal.’

‘Well, May, speak to your mother, and to your aunt about it. Whenever they get him to consent, write me, and your letter will end my banishment. I have spoken to my employer about it. He is quite of opinion that I would make my services of more value by a while’s experience in

a great machine work. He is pleased to say he is sorry to want me, but that he would not stand in the way of my interest, and so forth. I am to be the bearer of an order for some machinery, that he intended to send through the post, and he offers to pay my travelling expenses, as my explanations will be of service. And now, my dear May, make me happy by consenting to my trip. You shall have a letter every month at farthest. I will write you under cover to the Dominie. Mrs Taws wants to see you to-morrow night. And now, here is a ring, let me put it on your finger. Now, a parting kiss. May, you are solemnly betrothed.'

The lovers parted with vows and kisses; and some natural tears fell from the lassie's een, no doubt. Next night she took tea with my wife and me, and seemed cheery and hopeful. Our talk was chiefly of Peter, who was on his way to England. She knew I was his confidant, so was not so much abashed as otherwise she would have been. Her father, she told us, looked at her when her aunt mentioned the lad's departure, but he said nothing. By tacit agreement, as it were, his name was never mentioned before her father by any of the household. Even little Willie seemed to have grown sage and prudent. Strange to say, nobody seemed to miss our friend more than his disconsolate opponent, Andrew Lag, which is hard to be accounted for, unless we have some sort of sympathy in antipathy. However that may be, certain it is that Andrew regrets the absence of his friendly foe. Whenever I meet him his invariable question is, 'When did you hear from our friend Peter?' A fortnight after he left, letters arrived. One for his mother, under cover to his brother John, one to May, enclosed in one to me. He had got work with the firm to whom he carried Mr Brown's order. He says, 'Mr B. had mentioned me favourably in his letter. I am at work entirely new to me, in the locomotive department, so feel a little awkward, of course, but hope to get over that soon. A great number of men are employed in this work. Don't know how many. There are various workshops. In the one where I work there must be nearly a hundred. There are only three Scotchman in it; one belongs to Dundee, and two to Glasgow. The noise and turmoil almost stun me; yet there is no confusion, but, on the contrary, perfect order, and I may almost say, privacy, in this great crowd. Everything is new and strange to me, so that my thoughts are in a whirl. I may reduce them to something like order, and give them expression in my next letter. Commend me to my kind friend, Mrs Taws, and to my kind foe, Andrew; and salute my dear little May for me. On the cheek only—mind I'll find it out if you exceed your commission.' I sent May's letter by my pupil, Willie, charging him to give

it to her privately, and not to chatter about it. But I have no need to caution him now ; he is fully aware of the mischief that he was guilty of, and seems seven years older since. I did not fail to inform my fair young friend of the commission I had received, and to claim my due accordingly ; which she yielded smiling and blushing, at the same time telling me that we—that is Peter and I—were baith daft. Jenny had the assurance to bid her give me a slap. But when will wives be reasonable ? Our friend was very regular in his correspondence, and had, it appeared, become quite at home in the working department. Meanwhile the world went round as usual, and among all the changes that occurred, were none that materially altered the relative situations of the lovers. The aunt, I understood, had sounded Gideon Garyne on the subject of marriage, when he gruffly replied that it would be time enough for May to think of marrying seven years after this. The winter had passed, and spring was merging into summer. We were expecting our friend to visit us in a month or two, when letters came with intelligence that he was likely to postpone the purposed visit indefinitely. 'I have been promoted,' he wrote, 'which would give me unalloyed satisfaction if there was not reason to fear that it will prevent me from getting leave of absence. Not to trouble you with uninteresting details, it occurred briefly thus :—I had done some mechanical drawings, one of which the manager, who is a good friend of mine, took to his office, where one of the masters saw it, and, in short, the consequence was that I was advanced to be overseer in a certain department of the work. When I went to the pay table last Saturday, fifty shillings were laid down to me instead of thirty, my former wage. Had it been in Scotland, a few shillings would have been the head of it ; but if a man makes himself useful here, it is not so niggardly acknowledged. Now for the alloy in this good news. We are busy with an order for a railway company in the Netherlands, which must be completed by a certain time. Had I remained in the ranks, there would even have been some difficulty in getting away ; as I am situated now, it is of no use thinking of it. The manager tells me that most likely I may have to go over to the Continent for a time ; and if so, that I may perhaps get a week before starting. Now, here is my plan. You are well enough acquainted with the Rev. _____. You will call upon him and explain everything. Make him completely master of the circumstances that hinder our union. Then solicit his good offices with Gideon in our behalf. He is a good man, and more liberal than many of his flock. He knows me sufficiently to believe that the happiness of his young friend would be safe in my keeping. I fear most the objection of going to England ; but it would be madness

of me to throw up my situation and prospects. No sensible person would require me to do so. By and bye I should have no difficulty in procuring a situation on some of our railways at home ; so the separation would be but temporary after all. Meanwhile the old folks would be assured that their daughter had every comfort that a good income would provide. As to the continental trip, 'twould be but a marriage jaunt. I don't anticipate insuperable objections from May. I count on your influence. But, above all, I count on her love ; for I know she loves me. How her little heart will beat in her bosom like a frightened bird when she reads the letter I have enclosed to her. And now, my friend, I know you will think me mad. Never mind, call me so ; but, nevertheless, do as you are bid. If a man wholly possessed by one engrossing idea has but a precarious hold of his senses, then I am in danger ; for one has solely possessed me since yesterday, when it first awoke in my mind. I could not sleep a moment last night. I pictured to myself old Gideon giving away his daughter much like a miser parting with his gold to a spendthrift—she, the virgin gold, pale and agitated the while. I saw and felt the parting at the station : the old man losing his self-command, the kind mother in tears, little Willie and Annie crying, and you, my old friend, with the water of sympathy in your eyes. I heard the whistle of the engine, saw the poor girl-wife drop her veil to conceal the tears that would not be restrained, and—

‘What news from Peter?’ here interposed my wife.
‘Peter is mad,’ I replied—‘mad as a March hare.’
‘Ha’e done wi’ your nonsense now, and read the letter to me,’ she said.

During the reading of it she, contrary to the usual custom, forbore to interrupt me by a word.

‘Well,’ I asked, ‘what do you think?’
‘I think,’ she replied, that there will be a marriage in Gideon Garyne’s house this summer.’

‘But what reason have you—’
‘Fiddlesticks,’ she cried—‘reason has naething to do wi’t. Peter is a determined man, and May loves him. I tell you, they’ll soon be married.’

Strange to say, she was a true prophetess. In one little month they were married. Difficulties vanished magically one by one. The minister laughed heartily when I told him the story, and took the matter in hand like one that would not be beat. Gideon was driven from one objection to another, until, finding his defences no longer tenable, he finally yielded with the best grace he could assume, and the enemy took possession of the maiden fortress in the month of July. Peter’s ravings in that letter were prophetic, and have been verified in every particular. Gideon had a letter

from his daughter, headed 'Antwerp,' in October. She has been with her husband at various times since, in various parts of the continent of Europe; ay, and has sojourned with him in Africa. He was despatched to Egypt, connected with the Pasha's railway, and the brave little wife would not be left behind. I was stunned by a letter from Alexandria, wherein he told me that they had visited the pyramids, and that my initials, along with theirs, had been carved on the great pyramid. I was an inch or two taller that day.

Peter is now home, and fills a responsible and lucrative situation. Last Sunday I met old Gideon with his daughter on his arm, and his grandson in his hand, going to church. He is now proud of his son-in-law.

EXTRACTS FROM THE GUSEDUB RECORD.

BY THE LAST DOMINIE.

WILLIE WYSE AND JAMIE GLEIG.

SCHOOL INQUISITORS.

They frolicked and they ran,
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can.

Hood.

WILLIE AND JAMIE were inseparable companions, though very dissimilar in their dispositions. But their intimacy might be accounted for by the circumstance that both came from the same place, or rather district, one being a native of Farloch, and the other of Kirriehill, in the vicinity ; and, as strangers, being equally subjected to the jibes of my Gusedub scamps, they, of course, stuck closer to each other. As I promptly repressed all attempts at physical oppression that came under my cognisance, the rogues had recourse to a species of inquisitorial ordeal, not so easily prevented, to which they subjected the new arrivals. They pumped them—as the elegant phrase goes—of all particular information about their former experiences, and especially about their relations, and native localities ; and when they had drained the unsophisticated urchins dry, the travesty began. Woe to the candid little alien who simply gave his unreserved confidence to such insidious inquisitors ! Worse for him still if he is tempted by the seeming kindly interest displayed by his new friends, to fib a little, in order to magnify the importance of all connected with him, and, by inference, to enhance his own. He little wots that he is supplying the enemy with ammunition for his own future annoyance. No sooner is the available material all collected than the ingenuous torturers begin operations.

First tormentor : 'Sic a spate in the 'Dub the day ; the water canna win down for the stream tide.'

Second : 'I wadna wonder though the sea wad dam up the water, and drown a' the town o' Gusedub yet.'

Third : 'We should be like the fouk o' Farloch, we shouldna hae a sea ava.'

Fourth : 'No, just a loch wi' a man-o'-war or twa in't.'

First : 'I say, Gleig, wasna your father captain o' the frigate on the Loch o' Farloch ?'

Second : "Ay was he, and weaved at the loom in winter when the ship was laid up. Didn't he, Gleig ?"

Third : 'Na, he was aboon weavin' at the loom : he fished for pike when the ship lay at anchor. How big did you say was the ane he catched last year, Gleig ?'

First : 'He said it was as big's the boat, and took near a score o' the fouk o' Farloch to haul't aboard. Didn't you, Gleig ?'

'I never said that,' quoth Jamie, sulkily.

'What ?' exclaimed several voices, 'do you mean to deny't ?'

Fourth : 'O, it's no fair to tell lees on Gleig.'

First : 'Lees,' indignantly, 'can you deny, man, that you said your father hockit 'im in a wellee ; and that the pike nearly pu'd 'im in, and how he roar'd for help, and how the weavers o' the Spout cam'—'

Second : 'Na, 'twas the crew o' the frigate.'

First : 'Weel, the crew, it's a' the same, cam' to help 'im, and it took them a' to haul 'im up, and—how heavy was't again ?'

Third : 'I think he said it was a hunder weight and a-half.'

First : 'Tut, man, 'twas mair nor that, for his mither got twenty gallons o' oily out o't.'

'Oh ! oh !' exclaimed several.

Second : 'You're wrang, Jock, 'twas twenty gills.'

First : 'Weel, 'twas twenty measures o' some kind, onyhow.'

Fourth : 'I tkink, lads, ye're o'er hard upon Gleig.'

First : 'O'er hard, what do you mean by that ? The truth canna be o'er often tauld. How muckle did your father get for the pike, Gleig : You ken he sellt it at the inn, for the grand dinner to Panmure, and the county gentry.'

'There's o'er mony o' you upon ane,' said Jamie, ruefully.

Third : 'His father got twenty pound for the pike.'

Fourth : 'O, that's surely no true. It had been twenty shillins.'

Third : 'Twenty shillins,' contemptuously, 'they wadna mak' a fule o' the man that way. 'Twas twenty pound—mind it was to feed the gentry. Gleig's mither got a new mutch aft' ; and he got a pair o' new breeks himsel'. That's the very breeks he has on.'

Second : 'I aye wonder't how he had sic a smell o' stinkin' fish about him.'

First : 'So you might. His mither steer'd in meal i' the pot, after the oily was pour'd aff, and made cracklins till 'im.'

Fourth : 'I canna believe that. Did you eat the cracklins, Jamie ?'

'You may a' say what you like,' said Jamie.

First. 'Weel, if I'm leein', here comes Kirrie ; he's been often at the Loch, and will tell you the right way o't.'

Second. 'Kirrie kens naething about the Loch. He was born about Glenbrosen.'

Third : 'Is that i' the Heelands, Kirrie ?'

First : 'Ay, heeland enough. Wyse says the hills are as high as the Alpe that we read about in our geography.'

Second : 'Na, he said only "near as high."'

Fourth : 'I dinna believe that Wyse ever said onything o' the kind. Did you Wyse ?'

'You speerd,' said Willie, 'if they were as high as the Warmin hill, and I said they were twenty times as high.'

First : 'Weel,' you hear that,' triumphantly, 'you wad aye mak' me out to be a leear, Jock.'

Second : 'Is nae there a burn about Glenbrosen wi' lots o' trout in it ?'

Third : 'A burn ! what do you ca' a burn ? The bodies o' Prekin hae a burn ; but the men o' Kirrie have a river sae fu' o' trout that you could steer them about wi' a stick. Wyse says the water comes down Glenbrosen in a spate like a sea o' brown coffee, wi' rivers o' white cream on the tap o't.'

First : 'Man, it'll be fine to live there; but the fouk canna sup coffee to their brose surely.'

Fourth : 'Tut, man, he only said that the water was as brown as coffee ; didn't you, Kirrie ?'

'Ca't onything you like,' said Willie.

First : 'Whaurabout near Glenbrosen does Lady Barely bide, Wyse ?'

Second : 'Is that the lady that was henwife to Kirrie's grannie ?'

Third : 'Tut, you haverel ; it was Wyse's grannie that was henwife to Lady Barely.'

Second : 'I was sure that some o' them was a henwife.'

Fourth : 'Wyse doesna care what you say about his grannie. She was a dainty auld body, and good to him ; nae doot mony an egg he got frae her.'

First : 'Good till 'im ; it a' you ken about it. When he wadna rise i' the mornin', she set eggs 'neath 'im in the bed, and tauld him to cluck and bring them out.'

Screams of laughter ! Ha, ha, ha ! Cluck, cluck, cluck ! The cluckin' hen and the pike ; the pike and the cluckin' hen, resounded from all sides. Schoolboy human nature could stand it no longer. The melee began, and there were some bloody noses before I appeared on the ground. When all were in school, I was obliged to make some inquiry into the matter. Every witness introduced the offensive epithets into his testimony ; reiterated so pertinaciously 'the pike and the cluckin' hen,' that the half-stifled giggle could be heard from every corner. Seeing how matters stood, I thought it my best policy to cut short the inquiry, and—though it took me some pains to assume a stern countenance—to administer a general reprimand for the past, and caution

for the future. However, it was not easy to maintain perfect discipline that forenoon. 'Cluck' was occasionally heard in a low key, and I was obliged to handle the taws more than usual. The matter soon ceased to be provocative of laughter in school, but was not soon forgot. For a long time my young friends were known by their respective cognomens, severally and conjointly, 'the Pike and the Cluckin' Hen.*

THE REPORTER.

'WHAT about the lassies, Willie ; are you courting ony o' them ?'

'I am courting Miss Ambition, Dominie, and you know she brooks no rival.'

'But, Willie, do not dote extravagantly on this mistress of yours, to the exclusion of every nobler and holier feeling.'

'Oh, no,' he replied, 'were I merely ambitious of rising in the world, as it is called, of the distinction conferred by wealth alone, I might have chosen a course more likely to lead to such a consummation ; but I consult the bent of my own inclination ; that is to say, I gratify my tastes at the same time that I am endeavouring to better my circumstances. That is what I call rational ambition. I pity the man, however high his position, who shivers every morning at the thought of beginning his detested daily task. On the other hand, I envy the man, however humble, whose calling is his hobby, so to speak ; who delights in his employment, who feels both pride and pleasure in his work, whose mind anticipates his hands, who longs for the hour of beginning in the morning, and whose closing hour at night comes upon him unawares. To such a man life is one long holiday. The other is a galley slave chained to the oar, till the coming of his great reliever, death. Now, I have a love of literature, conjoined with large eventuality ; so have some reason to hope that what I aspire to would be to me, however laborious, a congenial occupation. At all events, I would leave a poor monotonous, and, to me, a disagreeable trade, that nobody with a soul above buttons would cling to. I am not altogether blind to, or unmindful of, the vexations and annoyances that are sure to lie in my way. Such compose the leaven that leavens all mundane affairs. Happy he who has more ale than barm.'

* Every man, on looking to his school-time, must remember chaffing such as this, and carried on till it became a sort of persecution to the victims. It is only given as a reminiscence of boyhood, otherwise the nonsense is not worth printing.

“Doubtless there’s a great deal of truth in what you say, Willie. I’m glad that you even take a slight view of the shady side, however. Hope is a fine thing in moderation. It is the j-y of youth: the very soul of enterprise. But hope “deferred maketh the heart sick;” if so, hope destroyed maketh the heart ashes. I would not quench, but moderate its cheering light. Let me ask you, if your whole dependence is on this reporting, for I know some local reporters, whose allowance for the work could scarcely get sent to their kail, as the saying is, and which pittance does them more harm than good.”

“Whe, Domnie, do you take me for an egregious fool? I have been offered the job of weekly reporter to a local journal, which offer I respectfully declined. It certainly would not be a good starting-point for one who meditated a higher flight. No, my friend, I don’t confine my studies to the art of reporting, though it is of vast importance to master it fully. I aim at acquiring some considerable command of the English language. For this reason I am a student of Latin and French. For this I am studying the several styles of our mst popular writers. In short, my great ambition is to be able to handle the pen of a ready writer. Meanwhile, I am neglecting no means of general information that lies in my power. I am well aware that all my aims will not be accomplished for long years to come, if ever. We have a proverb that says—“Bode o’ a silk gown, and you’ll maybe get a sleeve o’t.” Let me but accomplish something, and not fall disgracefully short of the mark; but I wont. If I live there must be no stopping short till I can pen a leading article, and conduct a journal. Now, don’t laugh at me, Domnie, in return for my confidence, which I would not give so unreservedly to any friend but yourself. You know me to be presumptuous. I know you to be discreet.”

“Weel, Willie, I’ll not say another word on the subject. I see you ken what you are about. When heard you onything of Jamie Gleig?”

“I had a letter from him about a month ago. Jamie is not subjected to one dominant passion, but yields a little, rather too much I fear, to each in turn. If he could see his way clearly to making a tolerable living on shore, I think he would throw off the blue jacket; but, like most sailors, he must have a spree when ashore, and goes to sea again with empty pockets. Though he never, as he says, took heartily to the ocean, yet it is questionable if he could settle steadily on shore after being blown about the world so long. When I hinted as much to him once, he told me that “landsmen might read about a seafaring life, and think they were up to the matter; but for all that they knew nothing about it.” It is, however, next to impossible for a

sailor to change his profession, whether he likes it or not. He seldom saves money to start him in anything else ; and though he did so, he is not acquainted with business ashore. While landsmen are observant of the workings of trade, sailors are observant only of the working of the elements and of their floating ark, that it may *not* touch the top of some submarine Ararat. They get but a glimpse of land-life now and then, and though conversant with the dangers of the sea, are of course not so observant of the dangers of the land, and will often steer their course safely across the ocean to land among the breakers and land-sharks of a seaport. Something like this I wrote to Jamie, who treated it with the characteristic levity of a true tar ; called me a weaving philosopher ; told me to get off the seatboard of the loom, and steer my way to a chair in a college, and then I could say to a friend, "mind your helm, and steer your bark into a snug haven, *as I have done.*" Well, I dare say he is right. In such a case my advice would have more weight.'

'Av,' I replied, 'we are all ready to give advice—to give better advice to our neighbour than what we walk by ourselves, disinterested, loving creatures that we are ; more careful of another's well-being than our own. A friend will say, "If I were you I would do so and so." My sage adviser, if you were *me*, in body, mind, and circumstance, I suspect you would do much the same as I do. However, we all presume to be counsellors. A clodpole would presume to advise Sir Isaac Newton. If a certain lower region is paved with good intentions, this world of ours, I should say, was paved with good advice. If angels weep at the perversity of men, they have almost equal cause to laugh at their absurdity. But 'tis near train time, Willie ; I must be moving. Come and give me a convoy towards the station.'

THE DOMINIE PRESSED INTO SERVICE.

Who grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And wrests the blow of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star.'

Tennyson.

IF I were to set matters down in the order in which I became acquainted with them, the 'Record' would indeed be a misnomer—a hodge-podge jumble of twaddle and incidents that nobody could make anything of but myself. It may be so as it is ; but I will endeavour at least to adhere as nearly as possible to the order of time in which the events touched upon really occurred ; so that I may make the account intelligible, in case any other person beside myself

— A T T A C H M E N T —

... I must go back a
little. I have been for two or
three years in the mountains. We were
in the highwood
country, on the bank of
the Clark Fork River. I
had a boat which had
a good many difficulties
in getting across. I found
the Indians were once
a powerful nation. They turned
out to be the Sioux. They were
a great many Indians
in the country. I saw
them in the paper in
the mountains. The next
morning I took my first
boat across the river. I drove
it across. It was a good
boat. I had a glimpse of

... in the m. Be
... in the p.m.
... the 2nd of November
... in the lead off
... with some
... as her head
... by Willie, and
... got the
... and many
... who saw
... nothing.

According to the Star a many body, he replied,

‘But come awa’ up to my quarters, and allow me a few minutes to finish this.’

‘I am in no hurry, Willie ; so come and get your business done, and then we’ll have a crack.’

We sat down. I looked over the news, while my friend wrote out his dispatch. He went and posted it, returned, and sat down, saying, ‘I’m greatly obliged, my old friend, and now I’m at your service.’

‘Well, Willie, are you employed, or are you merely practising to get your hand in ? I inquired.

‘Merely practising,’ he said. ‘But by advice of my good friend, the editor, who, amid all the distraction of business, has frequently found time to counsel me, and, I may say, to direct my studies. Seeing that I was anxious to learn, and determined to be painstaking, persevering, and patient, till I should qualify myself for some situation connected with the press, he became as anxious to help me as I was to help myself. No one will be bothered with giving you any assistance unless he is thoroughly convinced that you spare no pains yourself ; unless he sees that you make good use of his counsel ; that you throw away your self-conceit at his bidding ; that you rectify the errors he points out ; and, in short, that you visibly improve under his instructions. Then he takes both pride and pleasure in pushing you forward, and looks upon you in the light of a pupil or *protegé* ; at least, so it is in this case. In the last note I had from him he says in conclusion—“ Make yourself useful, and then convince people of the fact. Convince employers that you are qualified to become a useful and profitable servant, and then hold yourself in readiness for the first call. The whole may be summed up in these few words—Be qualified, be known, be ready.”’

‘Pithy and true, Willie, lad. I congratulate you on acquiring such a friend, and on having the sense to appreciate his friendship as you ought. I can foresee that it will not be long ere you bid farewell to the four stoops o’ misery.’

‘Well I hope so, but must have patience. I shall decline no start, however slightly it may heeze me upward. It will be easier to start again thence than from my present position. I mind when a laddie of catching a swallow-hawk. He was floundering in the mire and couldn’t get up, for his wings, when he attempted to fly, always struck the wet mud. I set him on the top of the dike to see how he would get on. He was away through the air in a moment. I drew no moral or lesson from the matter then, but can learn from it now that the lowly vale of life is to the poor man as the mire was to the swallow-hawk. If he gets on the least elevated starting-point, then he may spurn the mud. The great difficulty is to get on the top of the dike.’

But come awa' up to my quarters, and allow me a few minutes to finish this.'

'I am in no hurry, Willie ; so come and get your business lone, and then we'll have a crack.'

We sat down. I looked over the news, while my friend wrote out his dispatch. He went and posted it, returned, and sat down, saying, 'I'm greatly obliged, my old friend, and now I'm at your service.'

'Well, Willie, are you employed, or are you merely practising to get your hand in ?' I inquired.

'Merely practising,' he said. 'But by advice of my good friend, the editor, who, amid all the distraction of business, has frequently found time to counsel me, and, I may say, to direct my studies. Seeing that I was anxious to learn, and determined to be painstaking, persevering, and patient, till I should qualify myself for some situation connected with the press, he became as anxious to help me as I was to help myself. No one will be bothered with giving you any assistance unless he is thoroughly convinced that you spare no pains yourself ; unless he sees that you make good use of his counsel ; that you throw away your self-conceit at his bidding ; that you rectify the errors he points out ; and, in short, that you visibly improve under his instructions. Then he takes both pride and pleasure in pushing you forward, and looks upon you in the light of a pupil or protégé ; at least, so it is in this case. In the last ~~now~~ I had from him he says in conclusion—“ Make yourself useful, and then convince people of the fact. Convince ~~em~~ employer that you are qualified to become a useful and ~~pro~~minent servant, and then hold yourself in readiness for the ~~far~~ call. The whole may be summed up in these few words—Be qualified, be known, be ready.”'

'Pithy and true, Willie, lad. I congratulate you on acquiring such a friend, and on having the ~~sense~~ to appreciate his friendship as you ought. I can ~~foresee~~ that you will not be long ere you bid farewell to the ~~same~~ misery.'

'Well I hope so, but must have patience.'

no start, however slight it may be, the ~~more~~ the better.

be easier to start again thence than from ~~any~~ other point.

I mind when a laddie of catching a ~~small~~ ~~fish~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~was~~ ~~endeavouring~~ ~~to~~ ~~get~~ ~~out~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~mire~~ ~~and~~ ~~couldn't~~ ~~get~~ ~~up~~ ~~on~~ ~~his~~ ~~feet~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~attempted~~ ~~to~~ ~~fly~~, always ~~falling~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~ground~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

He ~~had~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~dike~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ ~~and~~ ~~death~~.

" You are a peer materialist, Willie, but a true one. I have known you before, with more ambition than brains, who would have sought to fly unless unless they could start from the top of a steeple; but as they grow older and their coveted starting-point, as a law, is beyond them they crawl along life grubbing all the way to the graves. But does the passion of ambition keep them from the safety, or does its greater rival, love, drive the engine of your heart? I ken the two cannot be separated; but let us in some energy, but one must predominate, that for a time at least. Your two loves are well in me, especially the young one that I admired so much in her. She is little more than a bairn yet, but she is a bairn fit for what an old-bairn!

" There are no old-bairns, Willie. The old-bairn is a sensible girl, but a little shabby is the very incarnation of old-bairn. She thinks of you. Now, had you not come so often to my help, and so often I would have been too late for the past? My help it was expected. What excuse would have been of any sort? I would sooner claim a real fondness for a bairn than allow your young tartar to affect me with a real fondness of her own. I care for. Fall in, the world of life, in company with the wildest young Indians that ever roamed the forests of America! Pray the poor bairn that matches me. Her that names her has been born in a bairn-house. And you be convinced, affecting a woman's feelings, that if you can't be angry with her then, She will surely be so fit in spite of you—give you no time then to be at peace with her; and then she is just ready to be a fresh Tartar!

" I should like to have a bairn."

" Why, what a world for you then, Dominic!"

" I do see, Dominic, that you bairns are a bairns. When you become a married bairn you will understand that a wife to keep healthy is not the best of living a certain amount of scolding. It is the scolding steams him; and the mouth is the safety valve. In processes, however, of derangement of the human mind by New Englanders, there's nobody to talk this bairning off from him myself. Now, if I had that bairn a bairn-house, and would get the whole scolding: then, I suppose, we should be all right. I will be clear of it, and let the bairn go for the wholesome exercise."

" You are a vulgar author of the sex, Dominic; but put me with you again, and I be thankful that you have not fully won you. She will get you married, him, in a week or two."

" Then I will bring in her bairn-house. For to say truth, and we can see you bairn with such parental nonsense for a bairn to say, and as I do, the last youngsters endure failures of head records like me."

SCHOOLMASTERS, SCHOOL FEES, AND WORKING MEN.

Haunted by the wrangling daw.

Tennyson.

My domicile was 'haunted by a wrangling daw' in the shape of my argumentative friend Andrew. He might be beaten ; he might be, though rarely, silenced ; but never convinced—

*'Or if convinced against his will,
Was of the same opinion still.'*

An argument broken off was as tantalising to him as, to a young reader, the periodical part of a story broken off in the middle of a love-scene. He could not rest till he had dragged his young friend Davy back to the resumé, as he called it. He was no sooner seated than he recommenced.

'Well, Andrew,' I observed, "'tis of no use trying to give the subject the go-by with you ; so I may as well consent to the resumé, and have done with it. It has been the fashion of late to hold up the long-neglected class of schoolmasters as the most useful and worst-used body of men. For some years past they have sailed upon the tide of public sympathy. They are acknowledged as gentlemen, and as having a right to live somewhat in accordance with that position. Now, all this is very right and proper if it could be kept up without grievous pinching to poor people. But it cannot. There are many working-men who do not have beyond eight or nine months' work in the year, who do not average above twelve shillings a-week. Many are even far below that figure. Now, some of these have two, three, or even four children, who are, or should be, at school. Will any one tell me how such men can maintain their families on such an income : pay four pounds or five, the rent of a comfortable house ; meet all their local taxes and all necessary expenses ; and then spare four or five pounds for books and schooling ? The truth is, they *cannot* do it, and of course they don't. Teachers sometimes complain that a promising boy is taken away from school just when he is getting into the way of learning. Alas ! that poor boy must have porridge to his belly and clothes to his back, though his mind should lie like an unweeded garden. Ay, it is easy to talk, easy to say to your neighbour you should do this or that ; but when you assume the part of adviser, take care that you are not guilty of sheer impertinence, or worse —of wanton insult. If you can do him no good, do him no harm. Don't hurt his feelings by telling him that he should run, when a mole might see that the poor man can scarcely manage to crawl. What is the remedy for all this, you will ask ? I answer, sadly, I can see none. But I —

LITTLE TO FLOW THE GUEDUB RECORD.

... the star of hope
... Andrew, 'or you will put us a'
... promise no to laugh, I'll
... Andrew. 'You sair in need o' a laugh;

... Davie. 'Let three of the ablest
... Give them good salaries,
... and let them preach each. Let them pro-
... discourses yearly.
... weekly in Edinburgh, and sent,
... Let every parish minister read
... in his worship as usual.
... twice a year. Let the Dominie
... of the minister having no
... teach the higher
... not there be no school fees for
... Let the weekly pay as usual.
... a certain sum between the
... and it might be optional on the

... and Andrew. 'Did you

... Davie. 'I'll faint till I be
... like a set of sensible,
... on what is
... The interest of the
... before all the young-
... We'll let them give com-
... of the publick purse, as they
... as to the understanding that
... Let the amount of com-
... on the security principle,
... of the incumbent. Let
... the parson's powder and
... the whole affair. Now, by this
... give them fine first-class sermons,
... the children of the
... of expense. Who could
... in this generation? who
... the world over, and be looked upon as a
... and your asylum, if you indulge
... Davie. 'I'll do it. After the little alone,
... and I do not think Davie was
... he would be more than willing to submit his
... to the Presbytery in the first place.'

‘Who is absurd in their talk now?’ said Davy. ‘You know the Presbytery takes cognizance only of church matters that are brought before them in the regular way. Every reform or improvement that ever took place in the world was absurd when it was first broached. I mean no disrespect to the clergy. I have proposed to give them fair compensation in a pecuniary way. I have proposed that they can either employ themselves in the honourable office of schoolmaster, or decline it if they choose, and enjoy their lettered ease when not employed visiting among their flock. I don’t think their respectability or usefulness would be taken away. If there was anything disagreeable in such a change all would share it alike. Church government could be carried on as usual. At all events, all the drawbacks would be as nothing compared with the end to be attained, if it could be attained.’

‘Ay, Davy,’ said Andrew, ‘if—I’m glad you have the sense to bring in the little word, I was beginning to think that you was moon-struck a’thegither. What think you, Dominie?’

‘I think that you and I, Andrew, lang syne built our castles in the air; but as we’re no so good at that sort o’ mason wark now, we main e’en let them build that can;—but here’s Sandy wi’ a letter to me.’

‘And a paper, too, Dominie,’ said Sandy. ‘If they come from ane o’ your scholars you havena muckle credit of him. I could scarcely mak’ out the address.’

‘Tut, man,’ I replied, ‘when you go up to address a public meeting in the hall, set that chap near you wi’ pen, ink, and paper, and I’ll be bound he’ll put down every word you say.’

‘Ha, ha! I daresay he nicht, Dominie,’ quoth the ‘Post,’ ‘it wadna be ill to do; but it wad be a kittle job the readin’ o’t, I’m thinkin’.’

‘Ay, that it wad, lad, to the best decipherer of pot-hooks in Britain—to a’ but the writer. This, Andrew, is from our friend Willie Wyse.’

‘Indeed,’ cried Andrew, ‘preserve us, sic a scrawl! Does the laddie keep ony hens! It’s something like the scratches o’ hen’s taes. What’s he doing?’

‘He is in a newspaper office, making himself useful in every way he can, especially in reporting.’

‘Glad to heart, glad to heart,’ cried Andrew, ‘I aye thought Willie wad do some good. When ither weaver loons were singin’ in the public house, or dancin’ about after the lassies, he was busy at his book, preparing for opportunity. There’s nothing in the world worth a button to be gained without perseverance and self-denial.’

‘True, my friend. If impotent wishes could command success in life we would all be fortunate men. “Give my compliments,” he says, “to Andrew Lag.”’

'That's right,' cried Andrew, 'sensible lad. There's good stuff in a young man who minds auld fous. Here comes your gudewife to hear the news.'

'Read it till us, man,' said Jenny, 'if there's naething in't particularly private.'

'It's but a hasty note, informing us that he has removed from Perth to Edinburgh, in consequence of an advantageous offer he received from the latter city. He is now on the staff of one of the most influential journals in Scotland.* He sends you kind regards, and bids me let him know if I should require a cradle, as he could procure a cheap one from the brokers, and forward it to me by rail.'

'O the rascal,' cried Jenny, 'if I had a haud o'im, I'll cradle 'im.'

'When heard you onything about the sailor loon, Dominie?' inquired Andrew. 'Willie and he wont to be staunch comrades.'

'O! Jamie Gleig, you mean. I fear he is lost, poor fellow. His folks have not had a letter from him for nearly two years. What makes the case more doubtful, he used to be very attentive to his friends, and remarkably regular, for a sailor, in his correspondence.'

'Sorry to hear't,' quoth Andrew. 'He was a spunky callant. But he'll maybe cast up yet. Letters from foreign parts are whiles no to be depended on.'

'True, and that is the chief ground of hope that he may be still alive. The last letter from him was written in Lima, the chief city of Peru.'

'I was speakin' about him,' said Jenny, 'just the ither day, to his aunty. She doesna expect ever to hear from him again.'

'Wha kens,' cried Andrew. 'Hope on hope ever. But I maun bid you good night, sirs. Come awa', Davy, man; what's that you're readin'? come awa', man. Get a heavy supper and go to bed. Maybe you may dream of some plan to pay off the national debt.'

* This sketch of 'The Reporter' is taken from real life, though of course the conversations are imaginary. My friend, the late Mr John Fife,—he was a good friend to me when he was sub-editor of the 'Scotsman'—was a Kirriemuir weaver lad. He pushed his way in the manner indicated, and reached a still higher position, or at least a more lucrative one. He left Edinburgh, after a farewell entertainment, presided over by the late Bailie Fife, to take his place on the staff of the 'Times' as parliamentary reporter in the House of Lords. Pretty well for a Kirriemuir weaver. He was not only an able and honourable man, but a kind friend, and never unduly elated by his success in life. He found a place for 'The Deil in Love,' in the 'Glasgow Citizen,' it being too big for the 'Scotsman,' and made me acquainted with several friends in Edinburgh, among others, the late Captain Charles Gray, who gratified me much by reading the 'Deil' to the late Mrs Begg, and her daughters—sister and nieces of Burns.

ENDOWMENTS AND EMOLUMENTS OF SCHOOLMASTERS.

They lay aside their private cares
To mind the kirk and state affairs.

Burns.

I WAS sitting by the fire one evening, reading our weekly newspaper, when 'jee the door gaed to the wa', and sans ceremony entered my old friend Andrew Lag, and along with him a young Gusedubite that he had picked up to supply the place of Peter Speid, who could now only visit us occasionally. Andrew could not exist without opposition, and—his opponents were all young men—so he had cast upon Davy Just, the heckler, the light of his ancient countenance.

'We've been disputing on a subject, Dominie, that I think should be very interesting to you, and, no to flatter you, on which your opinion, from your experience, is entitled to some consideration.'

'Indeed, Andrew,' I replied, 'I am highly gratified by your good opinion. A compliment from you is as rare as a favour from a banker. What, may I enquire, is the subject of dispute?'

'Weel,' said Andrew, 'the subject at issue is neither more nor less than your profession—its endowments and emoluments.'

'That matter should interest me, certainly,' I replied. 'You, of course, will be for upholding the old system intact.'

'Indeed I am not. You needna stare, Dominie, and hold up your hands. I ken what you mean, but—'

'Saul also among the prophets,' I exclaimed.

'Patience, man, till I explain. I am certainly for upholding our old parochial system, which has stood the test of time and experience; but I am decidedly against those voted grants of from twenty to thirty pounds a year, and more for aught I ken, unless given conditionally—that is to say, for cheapening the school fees, or for the schooling of a certain number of children. I wad make an exception in favour of small parishes where the fees were not so numerous as to amount to a decent living.'

'And what is your opinion, Davy?' I enquired.

'You know,' replied Davy, 'that I object to all monopolies, and so far agree with Andrew, but he only goes half-way. I am for free trade without restriction or protection. Now, a salary to a parochial teacher I view in the light of a protection; and even were it given on the conditions of which Andrew speaks, still it would be an injustice to you, and such as you, who have not only no salary, but have school and house rent to pay out of your fees.'

‘But consider,’ said Andrew, ‘that a parochial teacher has a certificate, a diploma, so to speak,—a guarantee of fitness and respectability that establishes him in the confidence of the public. That is indubitably worthy of some consideration. Now, other boys learning trades, earn something towards their maintenance during their apprenticeship; he, while learning his trade or profession—which is the genteel word—has earned nothing; on the contrary, he has been all along, or his friends for him, laying out money. Perhaps he earned his living, but forswore all recreation, all leisure hours, and even borrowed from the night. It amounts to the same thing. I freely allow, therefore, that as his business has cost more time, and trouble, and money than an ordinary trade would have done, so he is entitled to something more in the way of remuneration than a man working at such a trade. Now, suppose a teacher settled in a poor, or thinly-inhabited parish, where the fees alone would not support him, he must have a small fixed salary to supplement his income, else there would, perhaps, be no school in the parish. Suppose he receives twenty-five pounds a year; let it be on the condition that twenty-five children of poor parents shall have free schooling; if as many should avail themselves of the privilege. No minister likes to preach to a half-empty church, neither should, I think, a teacher like to labour in a half-empty school. By this plan—which I take to be in accordance with the spirit of the institution—the teacher would get his salary with satisfaction to himself and benefit to the parish.’

‘But,’ said Davy ‘would not those poor scholars be taunted by the others, and stigmatised as charity boys; and would not their parents, though poor, feel humbled, especially in the country, where every one knows mostly all in the parish?’

‘Whatever is general over all,’ replied Andrew, ‘is subjected to no special notice. There is too much cant about independence now-a-days. Are the scholars of Heriot’s Hospital, or of the schools connected with it, considered less respectable than the boys of our parish schools? Are not the bursaries of our colleges held to be an honour rather than a degradation to those that win and hold them. Away with such ultra-fantastic notions as that every one should do everything for himself, and no one should do anything for his neighbour. The very fundamental character of society is, assist one another. Why else were we created gregarious animals. Common sense—a sad misnomer—if we had a grain of it, would show us the beauty and necessity of the Gospel precept, “bear ye one another’s burdens”; but common selfishness makes us perpetually look the other way.’

‘Well,’ said Davy, ‘I’m not altogether clear about that

plan o' yours, Andrew. Supposing that there would be no disinclination on the part of the poorer class to get free schooling for their children, the fees would have to be raised to those that did pay, and that would cause a great deal of grumbling. In town parishes, our own for instance, instead of any backwardness in accepting such a boon, I believe there would be many more applications than there would be vacancies to fill up. The simplest way would be a reduction of the fees.'

'But,' observed Andrew, 'the rich would participate in a benefit meant for the poor alone.'

'Well, let them, it can't be helped ; they buy provisions as cheap, nay cheaper, in many instances, than poor people.'

'But what's the reason, Davy, for the Dominie's hearing us twa fools and not saying a word ; Why, I ask, are the fees higher than they were formerly, and what plan do you propose to lower them ?'

'Away with all endowments and protection !' exclaimed Davy. 'I have been beating about the bush, but now take open ground. Don't you see that your certificate, guarantee, or whatever you call it, and the prestige of an old and therefore honoured institution, enable parochial teachers in towns to retain double the number of scholars at double the amount of charge, than other teachers equally well qualified, who, instead of having twenty-five or thirty pounds of salary, have ten pounds less than nothing, as Paddy might say ; that is, have a ten pound rent to pay for their school. The last quarter that I was at a parish school there was paid for me six shillings and sixpence. I was doing no good. I well remember how I was bamboozled by the pupil-teachers ; tyrannical and capricious puppies, who were neither men nor boys, but hovering about the point of junction of ignorance and conceit ; the very worst time of life for any human creature to be "dressed in a little brief authority." Well, as I said, I was doing no good, and so was taken away and placed in a free unendowed school at threepence per week, less than half my former cost. Here was an able teacher, who looked after his business himself, and did not set boys to teach boys. Yet, though he did the whole work himself, he only charged half, less than half, my former salaried teacher. And he did his work well, as far as I was concerned, as under him I progressed rapidly. Now, where, I ask, is the mighty blessing of parish schools in our day ? This institution, at one time a great blessing, a national benefit, that could scarcely be overrated, and one of long standing, has served its day and generation, and, like old corporations and other things, good, even glorious, in their time, may now, by change of circumstances, be laid on the shelf, like useless crutches that a renovated cripple no longer requires. Then let the profession be free to all. It is

so now. The man inducted by authority, patronised and supported by endowment and prestige, has the cream of the business—the others have the whey. Of men who have qualified themselves for teaching, few will hesitate about turning their views toward some other means of living, as soon as they perceive that they cannot procure a school bolstered up to a certain extent by grant or influence. Fewer still will voluntarily prepare themselves for a school to depend wholly on their own private enterprise. 'Twould be like a naked, unarmed man striving with a champion in complete harness.'

'What think you of 'im, Dominie?' cried Andrew, rubbing his hands with great glee. 'That is scholastic reform for you, eh ; that will please you famoualy. Will you no speak, man, and tell us what you think of sic a Reformation—I should rather say Revolution ?

'You are an old sneck-drawin' dog, Andrew,' I replied, 'you have drawn our friend Davie out his extreme length, and now you would rax out the auld Dominie a bit. There's been no keeping of you down since your opponent, Peter, left. But indeed you care little whatever may be built up, or pulled down, so that machinery were crushed to powder. It would be rather invidious in me to expatiate upon the disadvantages under which I labour, and from which others are free. To pull others down is no pleasure of mine, nor would be, even were I to benefit thereby. This, however, I may tell you, Andrew, that a school attended by poor people's children, and unbolstered up—as our friend Davie phrases it—by any extraneous aid, is not a great deal better than your "four stoops o' misery." There are exceptions, of course. I have known a young, clever, energetic man persevere until he gained the confidence of the public to a certain extent—that is, I mean, till he had pretty well filled his school. Even then, from the low charge, 'twas but a poor enough living ; what must it be when but thinly attended ?'

At this point a messenger arrived in great haste from Andrew's better half to inform him that some one was waiting for him in his own house, and that he was ordered to come home directly.

'Requested, you mean, laddie,' replied Andrew. 'Weel Dominie, it seems I maun defer the pleasure of hearing you at this time.'

GOSSIP AND LEES.

'Tis too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning that doth cease to be
Ere one can say, it lightens.

Shakspeare.

I READ a love scene from the 'Gusedub Record' to my friend Andrew Lag. and asked him if he thought I had put the matter in an attractive form. About the verity thereof there could be no dispute. Now, Andrew's judgment, I am aware, is not always to be relied on. He is prejudiced, and allows his opinions to be warped by prejudice, even when he knows better. He is too old, and cold, and prosaic to have any ideas of love, save what are drawn from his experience of its decay, with, perhaps, some glimmerings of ancient remembrance, like tapers in a charnel house. And he is somewhat spiteful withal, as he is under the impression that I have caricatured him in 'The History of Peter Speid,' which is not true, as those intimately acquainted with my old friend can testify. However, I instal him in the chair of criticism sometimes, for want of a better judge, and suffer for my complacence.

'You're an auld fule, Dominie,' he said on the occasion. 'Do you mean to tell folks that Willie Wyse poppit the question to the lassie in a hand-clap in that daftlike way? It's quite inconsistent with the cautious calculating character of Willie. It's out of keeping with a' the rest of his conduct; so I canna believe it.'

'Out of keeping it may be,' I replied; 'but true, nevertheless; true to nature, Andrew. You have forgot all about that sort of thing. What says Nature's high-priest, Shakespeare?—

'The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.'

You have forgot that our friend is a young man with strong passions, though they don't always run away with him. He is not, as you seem to think, an apathetic ancient, like you or me, but has all the warm feelings of youth, though he does not 'wear them on his sleeve for daws to peck at.' No, no, Andrew, still waters run deep, and bear away all obstacles. Their volume is force. Who was ever wise in love? Not the wisest man.—

'The wisest man the world e'er saw
He dearly lo'ed the lasses.'

And if the wisdom of Solomon and the strength of Samson became as folly and weakness before the fascination of woman, who shall say he will always act wisely and well

L

where the bewitching creature is concerned? Here consistency and inconsistency meet and mingle.'

'It may be so,' said Andrew; 'but you have placed the young folks in rather a ridiculous light. It reminds me of a love passage in *Don Quixote*, where the inimitable Cervantes makes the knight dismount and fall on his knees in the mud before his adorable Dulcinea, the only difference is, that you dinna say Nelly's breath had the smell o' garlic.'

'For shame, Andrew,' I cried. 'Even to recal such a ludicrous scene to remembrance in connection with our lovers is little short of profanation.'

'Weel,' said the cynic, 'I confess that I am somewhat fastidious—you may think hypercritical. I am only anxious for your credit as a veracious recorder. I ken the lad and lass met strangely enough in England, but I'm a little dubious about such a hasty puddin' as that you've cookit for them, or love feast, should I ca' it.'

'You are shockingly vulgar in your comparisons, Andrew. I tell you, man, I have it from unquestionable authority, and the young folks will not deny it. You will not find me 'overstepping' the modesty of nature or 'tearing a passion to rags' in the Gusedub Record. I put no more flesh on the dry bones than the skeletons will fairly carry, and yet you accuse me of improbability. Look at the high-spiced novels of the day, served out weekly in printed drams for excitement-loving readers; filled up with dissipated noblemen, perfect gentlemen, rascally lawyers, treacherous and devoted servants, good and wicked matrons, revengeful demons, persecuted angels, despairing lovers, villainous rivals, amorous nabobs or eligible mummies; flinty-hearted fathers, ambitious match-making mothers, fortune-hunters, and gamblers. Then we have impoverished families, daughters turned governesses, noble resignation, unmanly persecutors, and brave knock-'em-down protectors. Then again we have unprotected females—'beautiful exceedingly'—pining while oceans roll between them and their lovers; we have pious rectors, charitable ladies, poor impostors, letter-carrying maids, and fortune-telling, heir-stealing gypsies. Now for a few of the doings of these novel-filling personages. Assassinations, duels, seductions, abductions, and robberies, disinterested sacrifices, boundless generosity, endless gratitude, base oppression, unprovoked malignity, evil-requited benefactions, treacherous betrayments, and broken-hearts. Then, towards the close, we have detected scoundrels, discomfited rivals, deceased uncles, enriched nephews, returned and enraptured lovers. Then heirs are discovered just as they come of age, identified by moles or marks on their bodies, backed by the testimony of nurses and gypsies, and the death-bed confessions of remorseful suicides. Then we

have detected swindlers, unmasked hypocrites, baffled fortune-hunters, and such like unhanged rascals, fleeing to the Continent from disgrace or prosecution. Then are great dowries recovered from insolvent trustees, who turn out to be solvent after all ! Now we near the grand climax ; now come jewels, dresses, weddings, balls, rejoicings ! roasted oxen are devoured on the lawn ; bells ring ; cannon boom ; carriages are whirling the happy creatures away on their bridal tour ; and all who have helped to bring about this happy consummation partake in their felicity ! I have forgot to introduce the fainting fits, salts, and eau-de-Cologne, which come in rather awkwardly now when the happy pair, in the words of Thomson—

‘Will flourish long in tender bliss, and rear
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
And good—the grace of all the country round.’

‘Preserve us,’ cried Andrew, ‘such an awful dish o’ hotch-potch, got up in most admired disorder. A French fricasse, or a Spanish olla podrido wad be naething to it. I maun hae a better opinion of your veracity, Dominie—that is to say, comparative, you understand.’

‘Comparisons are odious, Andrew. I want no equivocal or left-handed compliments. ‘Truth is strange, more strange than fiction.’ There are some matters of fact that the boldest novelist would hesitate to introduce in a work of fiction, because of their seeming improbability. It happened not very long ago that an author introduced a strange fact in a fictitious story, all of which was admitted to have a great air of probability, and was accepted and admired accordingly, excepting the unfortunate fact, which was utterly condemned as an outrage on public taste, and only worthy of the renowned Baron Munchausen.’

‘Weel, I ken naething o’ the Baron’s history ; but I kenn’d our Deacon Elshie and Coal Sandy o’ Perth, twa celebrated mendacious story tellers. I was not so weel acquainted with Sandy ; but the Deacon, I think, believed some of his own stories. The last I heard him tell was when he was a very old man. He said that the records of the Temple of Jerusalem had been lost for ages, and that King James, the British Solomon, offered a reward for their recovery ; that after long searching, they were found in Auchmithie. On some doubts being expressed, he indignantly offered to show proof from the Old Testament that the said records had been deposited in that village. Weel, the half-witted body put on his specks and lookit for an hour, carefully moving his finger down the pages. I tried to reason the matter with the Deacon before I left, but it was of no use. I learned afterwards that he actually looked more than another hour, and said that he would find ’

before he slept. Was this not what doctors would ca's a hallucination.

'I should think so,' I replied. 'If our friend the deacon had been perfectly sane, he would have had some idea of the extent of his neighbour's credulity, which he had not, for he was evidently disappointed and angry when his auditors expressed a doubt of his veracity.'

'The same with Coal Sandy,' said Andrew, 'but with this difference, that the more doubts you expressed, the more marvellous became his stories, whereas the Deacon in such a case became surly and then silent. When I was in Perth last I was introduced to Sandy by a townsman residing there, who said that the Deacon had no chance with Sandy. One of the party, to draw him out, told the extravaganza of the enormous cabbage stock and boiler; whereupon Sandy exclaimed, 'That's naething, man. When I was in India —he had never been out of the county—I saw a hunder thousand men makin' a boiler. When they left aff wark on Saturday night, they threw their hammers intil the boiler, and when they cam' back to their wark on Monday morning, they were just in time to hear them fa' to the boddim !'

'He beats the Deacon,' I whispered.

'Stop a little,' returned my friend of Perth, and signalled to the drawer, who forthwith turned the discourse northward, spoke of sailing so far north with Captain Parry that the brandy froze in the bottles.

'Gae awa, man,' exclaimed Sandy, 'I hae been that far north, that we had to stand owre the fire, man, and thaw the very words we were speaking, man, afore we kent what ane anither was sayin' !'

'I give it up,' I said to my friend. 'The Deacon has no chance. There is humour, too, in Sandy's extravagance, which serves to make his stories more acceptable, and even more tolerable to lovers of truth and haters of falsehood. At all events, I allow that the equivocal honour belongs to the Fair City, of possessing a greater leer than he of Gusedub.'

But I beg the reader's pardon for inflicting so much nonsense on him, or her. 'Tis time to end this chapter about gossip and lees.

THE DOMINIE AND JENNY UPON BISHOPS.

A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
And faith he'll prent it.

Burns.

IN these 'Extracts,' at page 212, I mentioned having received a letter from my friend Willie Wyse. He informed me therein that he had had an offer from Edinburgh, which he had accepted, and that he was installed there as sub-editor of one of the principal newspapers of Scotland. His friendly employer in Perth had counselled him to accept the offer, though he, kind disinterested adviser, should lose a valuable assistant. It is refreshing to meet with an unselfish man now and then in the world. It is a great happiness to have such an one for a friend.

Willie had been about two years in the Fair City, and had officiated as reporter, clerk, reader, and editor, each and all by turns; in short, endeavoured, as he said, to make himself useful in every possible way. At length, as our Laureate says,

'He made by force his merits known,'

and in due time took his well-won place in Edinburgh among 'the gentlemen of the press.' Here he remained three years, with credit to himself and satisfaction to his employers and the public. By that time he was so well known to the newspaper world, even in London, that on an occasion when the staff of the 'Thunderer' was to be increased, Willie was offered, without solicitation, the arduous and honourable office of Parliamentary Reporter. He was loath to leave Edinburgh, where he had gained many friends; but this offer was so advantageous that, after much hesitation, he at length accepted it. I was not much surprised when I first learned that he had removed to Edinburgh and was settled there. I took it to be the goal of his ambition, which he was sure to reach sooner or later, if he was spared. That appeared to me but the natural course of his indomitable perseverance; but when I had a paper and a letter from London, and was informed that my old schoolboy, the Kirriehill weaver lad, was engaged as Parliamentary Reporter to the 'Times', I was a little astonished. 'Twas true, however, and well known to be true, though here a little mystified for obvious reasons.

As proof of the estimation in which Willie was held in Edinburgh, when on the eve of leaving for London, he was invited to an entertainment, which was presided over by *one of the magistrates of the city, and crowded by gentlemen of the press, the pulpit, and the bar, besides many*

other influential citizens. Here he was highly complimented, and presented with a handsome token of esteem and friendship. He had indeed won golden opinions from men whose esteem was worth having, and could commence his career in London with the happy consciousness that, should he weary of the Great Babylon, he would aye be welcome back again to Auld Reekie.

When I read to Jenny the newspaper report of that honorary entertainment, she interrupted me now and then with exclamations of astonishment. When I had done, she asked me if Willie was to sit among the members of parliament?

‘He will sit,’ I replied, ‘in the reporter’s gallery of the House of Lords.’

‘Will he wear a wig?’ she asked.

‘A wig! no, you foolish woman. What makes you ask such a ridiculous question?’

‘Because,’ replied Jenny, ‘I’ve read somewhere about lords wearing wigs,’ and I thought Willie being among them wad hae to wear ane too, no to be odd like.’

‘Nonsense,’ I said, testily. ‘Only the Lord Chancellor and the Bishops wear wigs. It is an absurd remnant of antiquity still kept up.’

‘And what for does the bishops sit there, when they should be makin’ up their sermons?’

‘They sit there to hear, speak, and vote—to legislate, in short. As to making up sermons, they have a lot of rectors and curates under them for that job. The curates being but poorly paid, have, of course, the most work to do.’

‘It’s a great shame,’ cried Jenny, ‘even in warldly ways, to pamper the idle, and pinch the eident, but it’s a far greater shame in religious service. What effect o’ steepin will the bishops hae?’

‘From two to twenty thousand a-year, and upwards. Some of them have more than a hundred pounds for every hour they work, while many of their curates work all the year for less than a week’s wages of my lord bishop.

‘Na,’ exclaimed Jenny, ‘but that’s a disgrace to a Christian land. Does the Queen ken o’t?’

‘Perfectly,’ I replied.

‘And can she no help it?’

‘I am afraid she cannot.’

‘Weel, its a national sin; and I pity her, puir lady, for she maun be grieved to see sic a crying evil that she canna do awa wi’. What would the Apostle Paul say if he were to come to our warld again, just for a day, and see the like o’ that? He wha laboured wi’ his ain hands lest he should be burdensome to his puir brethren.’

‘Were the Apostle Paul to appear in a bishop’s drawing room, he would probably meet with but a very sorry reac-

tion. Yet ours is a Christian land ! Dante, the Milton of Italy, who wrote five hundred years ago, exclaims—

‘Ah ! Constantine, of how much ill the cause ;
Not thy conversion, but the plenteous dower,
That the first wealthy bishop had from thee.’

So long ago the great Catholic bard lamented over the wealth and consequent luxury introduced into the Church ; and still in our enlightened age have Protestants reason to feel a corresponding regret. In the way of corruption truly ‘there is nothing new under the sun.’

‘It’s awfu’ to think o’,’ said Jenny ; ‘and so the bishops hae naething to do for a’ that waste o’ siller, but sit at their ease in the House o’ Lords, and look after their clergy when at hame.’

‘They look after their friends and connections, Jenny. Some of the fattest livings under their charge are worth from a thousand to two thousand pounds a-year. Some of the secondary dignities are worth far more. Only a few months ago died old Lord Godolphin, who was the son of a bishop, and held, by favour of his father, several rich livings, amounting to upwards of six thousand pounds yearly, for half a century ; upwards of a hundred pounds a week for fifty years, and never preached a sermon in any o’ his parishes. This is but a single instance. That old bishop, Godolphin’s father, must have pocketed—he and his sons and sons-in-law—upwards of a million of the public money, for which John Bull never, I believe, had so much as a dozen sermons, which any one might buy at an old book-stall for sixpence.’

‘Dinna tell me ony mair about it, Dominie, if you wadna hear me ban outright, for my patience is gane.’

‘I can weel believe that, Jenny, my lass. Whoever were your forebears, I dinna think Job was ane o’ them ; at all events you haena inherited his temperament.’

‘And what,’ she demanded, ‘have you inherited ?

‘Wheesht, Jenny, I maun hae a joke at somebody’s expense, to lighten the load of indignation that every honest creature must feel in contemplating such an abomination.’

‘Weel, weel, Dominie,’ replied Jenny, ‘but I maun go and look to the kail pot.

EXTRACTS FROM SANDY SNARL'S DICTIONARY.

ADVICE :

COUNSEL OFFERED AS WORTHY TO BE FOLLOWED.

Good advice is offered to everybody, bad as the world is. Even bad people will say, 'Don't do as I do, but do as I bid you.' Almost every one assumes the office of adviser, whether qualified or not. No doubt Shakspeare and Newton got good advice from contemporary blockheads. To act the part of good adviser, you must first select your victim ; then assume a solemn face, becoming a moral philosopher. Your first operation is to lay bare all his festering sores, like a cool experienced surgeon, and probe them to the quick, that your subject may feel at every cut of your unsparing scalpel what a diseased wretch he is, and be thankful that he is in the hands of a physician who will dissect him alive, before he pours the balm of good advice into his eager ears. Having brought him to such a hopeful state by paying no regard to his morbid feelings, he will straightway become amenable to good counsel. Tell him then, that if you were in his place, you would do, not as he does, but as *you* do. He may reply that if you were him, you would do as *he* does. But as he is an unreasonable creature, go on with your good advice. Tell him, over and over again, what he knows well enough already, to fix your precepts more firmly in his mind. Bid him look at *you* who have not had the advantages he has had, that he may see clearly how much better you have done under all your disadvantages. Although you may be of a stolid apathetic temperament, and he of a sensitive nervous organisation, tell him that you have been assailed with all his temptations, but have successfully resisted them ; that you have felt all his impulses toward evil, but have conscientiously controlled them. Let him fully understand that you are a superior being ; that you pity while you blame him ; that you are anxious only for his welfare ; and that if he values good counsel, he will surrender to you the control of his body and mind, and, in short, will worship you. Pity the good adviser is in this respect so like the Devil.

DIGNITY :

HONOUR, ELEVATION OF MIND. ELEVATION OF BODY IS SOMETIMES CONSIDERED DIGNITY. ELEVATION OF RANK OR PLACE. ELEVATION OF ASPECT; GRANDEUR OF MIEN AND DEPORTMENT.

THE man who would walk with dignity must pace along the pavement as if he were measuring land, with his head up in the air, like a hen drinking water. He had as well carry a cane for ornament, not for use, and flourish it gracefully. Such dignified carriage gives this advantage, that he is not obliged to see or recognise humble individuals, who carry their unassuming heads through a lower stratum of the atmosphere. He should look straight forward, or rather upward, at an angle of twenty-five degrees at least, and look as if he were looking at nothing in particular. This gives an impression that he, 'the observed of all observers,' could not, without the most gracious condescension, stoop to notice anything humble, low, or mean. If he stops to speak with any poor body, it must only be with one who raises his hat and humbly acknowledges the dignity and condescension of his superiors. In such a case the dignified personage will graciously incline his head to listen with a patronising air. As for the poor man who has an independent spirit, and is somewhat rude withal, who looks on such a display of dignity as a mere show of vanity, and will not worship the exhibitor, the dignified gentleman will ignore that man's existence altogether.

PROPHET :

SEER. ONE WHO FORETELLS FUTURE EVENTS.

WE have no inspired prophets now, but we have many who assume the prophetic office notwithstanding. The prophetic mantle in modern days is merely a cloak of assurance. When people of consummate impudence covet notoriety, they take up the presaging trade quite naturally. We have had our political prophets, in and out of Parliament, without number. According to some of these seers, Great Britain should have been bankrupt long ago. The prophecies of Peel, Derby, Disraeli, and the minor political prophets, would make a curious book for the next generation. In our days, the nonfulfilment of prophecy has no effect in damping the confident ardour of our prophets. They very

foolishly foretell events that are to happen in their own times, but, as they never come to pass, nobody believes in them, scarce even the prophetic spouters themselves. After Catholic emancipation, we should all have gone astray after the Scarlet Woman. After the first Reform Bill, fierce democracy should have trampled on crown, mitre, and coronet. After repeal of the corn laws, agriculture should have gone to pot, and home trade, and foreign too. After the second Reform Bill, if we don't send our children to school, and keep them there till they can read the big words without spelling, it would appear that the days of our empire are numbered, and not far distant the time when the New Zealander will sit among the ruins of London. The British constitution is said to be breaking up, an ecclesiastical blood vessel has been opened lately, and though the hemorrhage has not been great, many prophets see in it the beginning of the end, when Christianity will go out with Establishments, and the last remnant of religion will vanish with the ritual and the vestments. If any of those oracles appear fanciful, we must remember that Poetry and Prophecy were related of old, and may yet count kindred.

RESPECTABLE :

DESERVING OF RESPECT.

A RESPECTABLE man should be one who deserves to be respected, honoured, or esteemed for his upright conduct. This signification is now obsolete. The respectable man pays deference to society by complying with its established usages. He has his carefully-preserved person clothed in a good, well-fitting, fashionable dress. These are the first steps towards respectability. He should have a knocker on his door, or a door bell, which is still more respectable. But if he cannot afford to keep a servant, and must let his wife or daughter attend to the door, then his respectability is not of a high order. If he keeps a servant, he may be deemed respectable. If he has more than one, there can be no doubt of his respectability. If he keeps a gig, he is a most respectable personage. If he has a carriage and pair, driven by a coachman in livery, it were sacrilege in mammon-worshippers to call his respectability in question. He is next to the honourables, and would consider himself treated with disrespect if he were merely designated a respectable man. He is a highly respectable gentleman. Suppose that he has a thousand pounds a-year, then he must, of course, be twice as respectable as a most respectable man, who has only five hundred. There are certain professions in which

men of less means are yet held to be respectable—for instance, the clerical profession. But Dissenting clergymen, with very small stipends, cannot compete in respectability with those of the Establishment. A schoolmaster may be considered respectable if he teaches the higher branches of learning, but it is scarcely worthy of respect to teach little boys and girls the A B C. A respectable tradesman is in the lowest grade of respectability. He must be a master, of course, who, after his early struggles, has acquired as much capital as enables him to keep his coat on. A respectable journeyman is a myth, and nobody ever heard of a respectable sweep, a respectable bellows-mender, or a respectable navvy.

SUCCESS :

ACHIEVEMENT, COMMON CRITERION OF MERIT.

To FAIL in a praiseworthy undertaking is to be ridiculous ; to succeed is to be meritorious. No matter how noble the undertaking, or how arduous ; no matter how much ingenuity, energy, labour, and perseverance is exerted, how much time and money is spent, and how much tear and wear of life, if the climber fall short of success by a single step, he becomes a butt for ridicule, and, as an unsuccessful man, he is butted by the blatant herd in much the same way as a stricken deer by its fellows. But if he succeeds ; if he transforms a speculation into an accomplished fact, and bears down all opposition, then his good fortune is as wonderful as his genius, and his former detractors will join in his praise, simply because he is a successful man. Energy, perseverance, talent, and genius, all are accorded him, for all are included in that magic word, *success*. Since the great bulk of mankind are agreed in this, there must be some merit in the successful man. He must employ means well adapted to the end in view ; he must dexterously avail himself of other men's experience ; he must not be tempted to swerve from his purpose, but keep it always in view : he must take note of the stumbling-blocks that others have fallen over, so as to avoid them ; he must not get disheartened at difficulties, or at the slowness of his progress, but be patient, persevering, self-denying, and devout, very *devout*, for Success, like Mammon, will not be propitiated with lukewarm devotion, but must be sought by the devotee with all his heart and with all his soul. So with such qualities we see that idolatry must be the besetting sin of the successful man.

BORE :

TO PERFORATE A ROUND HOLE. TO PENETRATE A PERSON'S PATIENCE. A TEDIOUS PERSON IS CALLED A BORE.

A THOROUGH bore requires some natural qualifications, besides disabilities. He must be long-winded, with considerable command of language. He must be intensely egotistical. He must be obtuse and thick-skinned, and he must entirely ignore other people's feelings. If he has a hobby and never tires talking of it, so much the more adapted for a bore, but he must never tire talking at all events. The complete bore never will, by any chance, talk of that which might interest his victims. He is also guided by a sort of instinct in singling out his proper prey, and in searching them out, and fixing upon them at the most inappropriate times. The rich, with their exclusive habits, can generally keep bores at a distance. Golden armour, and copper sheathing will protect both men and ships from different kinds of boring animals. People who can shut themselves up in privacy, and pay a servant for telling such fibs as, 'Not at home,' 'Engaged just now,' are exempted in a great measure from respectable bores. But these pests find their way into many undefended shops and offices, and the more respectable they are, the more difficulty there is in getting rid of them. But vulgar bores may range at will on the unfenced common of life, and have the entry at every door. Here the victim has no inviolate sanctuary of retreat. The vulgar bore enters unannounced, takes welcome for granted, makes himself at home at once, takes a seat—it may be without bidding—and no matter who or what is there, relatives or duns, family discussion, family quarrels, or confusion of washings and redgings-up, when the very nakedness of poverty is exposed, and the blush of vexation and shame crimson the face of wife or daughter; and perhaps the goodman of the house, in blessed abstraction, has been enjoying himself with some of the great master minds of literature; if so, he must lay the book aside with a sigh of resignation, and listen—with what patience he may—to peevish maundering, egotistical twaddle, or imbecile drivel, for hours together. The wretched victims may be thankful if this social incubus and insatiable vampire takes itself off before the hour of midnight, and leaves them to peace and sleep.

DIRT :

MUD, FILTH, MIRE, &C. ANY MATERIAL THAT WE DON'T LIKE TO COME IN CONTACT WITH.

RIGHTLY speaking, any material in the wrong place is dirt. Soot is not dirt in the chimney, but becomes so immediately it touches our hands or faces, clothes or furniture. The ink I am using would be dirt on a white dress, and a drop of whitewash would be dirt on a black coat. Often one material evenly disposed over another constitutes cleanliness, and if unequally spread, constitutes dirtiness ; in such cases the particles of matter are either in their right or wrong places. Flour is clean enough for our mouths, but dirty enough for our clothes. We relish rich gravy, when we can get it ; we don't object to have greasy mouths, but we do to have greasy elbows and knees, which are abominably dirty. Rich loam is a treasure on a field, but scrape your feet, and wipe them well lest you should take any of the dirty loam into the parlour. Effete matter is accounted filth. Animal and vegetable matters undergoing decomposition are accounted so, for the very sufficient reason that they are offensive to our senses and injurious to our health. But after they have become part of the soil, assimilated by the chemistry of nature, they produce good crops of grain and potatoes, which cleanly people eat without thinking of the dirty materials that nourished their growth. The pure young blood that beautifies the cheeks of a pretty girl, a scratch with a pin may bring outside the skin, and give the little beauty a dirty face directly. The colours that an artist would use in painting a portrait of Her Majesty the Queen, would dirty the whole royal wardrobe were they to be so misused. The fairest flowers, the sweetest fruits, the richest viands, the rarest wines, all become dirt when they are where they have no business to be. Absolutely, there is no such thing as dirt. Relatively, all matter in the wrong place is dirt.

INSANE :

UNSOULD IN MIND.

WE are told by high authority that there is not a perfect man upon the earth. Therefore there is none perfectly sane. We do not, however, say that a man is insane unless the mind is very much deranged, but with regard to how much derangement amounts to insanity doctors as well as lawyers differ. But all may surely agree that just so much

as a man wants of perfect sanity, he is to the same extent partially insane. We call such degrees of deficiency by milder names, such as peculiarities, eccentricities, crotchets, hobbies, and so forth. We speak of a man having a slight craze, a bee in his bonnet, a weak side, or as wanting two-pence of the shilling. These are popular expressions, which denote a small degree of unsoundness of mind, or partial insanity. The state of mind that approaches nearest to perfect sanity is not profoundness, or brilliancy, or acuteness of intellect, but an evenly-balanced mind, all whose parts are in mutual harmony, and none of them overriding the others. I believe this enviable state is oftener found in mediocrity than in minds of a higher order. Perhaps one may think so, by reason of the weaknesses of great minds being more conspicuous by contrast with their brilliant talents. But we see that nature never produces minds great in all parts, but humbles the pride of intellect by allaying it with mortifying defects, which we are pleased to see, because by these, at least, we can claim kindred with the most highly gifted. Personal qualities are as frugally dispensed by nature as mental. To pourtray a Hercules or Venus, the artist must copy from many living models, so whoever would pourtray a perfect mind must draw from many minds, and even then would produce but an approximation to it. No imperfect man can draw perfection, and there is not a perfect man upon the earth. If there is not a perfectly sane man upon the earth, we must all be partially insane, and the world a great asylum.

POVERTY :

INDIGENCE, DESTITUTION, DEFECT ; AND A RADICAL DEFECT
IS POVERTY.

It is such a deficiency of all that is desirable in life that he who is 'steeped in it to the very lips' is a pariah, an outcast from respectable society. He is the leper of modern days ; and, for his loathsome disease, he has himself to blame. The hand of the diligent maketh rich. It is want of industry, economy, or prudence that keeps a man in poverty. There is always plenty of work to be had, if we can credit those that don't need to look for it. Economy may pinch wife and children for food and clothes, and put what he cheats them of into the savings bank. Prudence is a cautious fellow ; he doesn't marry in a hurry ; he waits till he has feathered his nest, before he indulges himself with such an expensive luxury as a wife. No wonder if he looks askance at foolish young people who marry early, and

have no property but children. Self-denial is virtue. Self-indulgence is sinful. It makes people poor, and keeps them poor. *Therefore, poverty is crime.* This is the creed of the well-to-do prudent money makers, and also of the fortunate inheritors of wealth. No doubt there are many who seem never to learn the value of money, and whose consequent poverty is a chronic disease, and whose squandering starves their families, and therefore their poverty is sinful. But the world, though it sometimes makes distinctions, cannot be bothered always distinguishing cases. It is too busy making and spending money, and it saves time and trouble to lump all cases together, and from this generalisation to form the creed of the propertied classes, to wit—POVERTY IS CRIME.

SENSATION :

PERCEPTION OF EXTERNALS BY MEANS OF THE SENSES. EXCITEMENT FROM MODERN PLAYS AND NOVELS.

SENSATION, in its popular sense, is a dram for the mind. Many weak minds are so fond of it, that they cannot relish the still waters of ordinary life. Their taste has become vivified by stimulants, and they have a craving for the fire-water of literature. The publicans who pander to this morbid craving, are the popular authors of the day. Those who deal only in the milier, and more substantial beverages, have but a small trade, comparatively, as they depend chiefly on sensible customers. If an author would have a brisk trade, and one that pays, he must learn to minister to minds diseased. He must deal in startling incidents, fearful situations, and over-mastering passions. He must have always on hand a stock of atrocious villainies and horrid murders. He must afflict his heroes and heroines with the most direful distresses, or he will not reach the feelings of those who can shed tears only for fictitious affliction. He must pile up the agony till it produces that maudlin state of intoxication that sensationalists delight in. He must draw out the suspense till the nerves quiver under the strain. He must make his admirers drink the cup of mingled horror, pathos, and bathos, to the dregs, and then let the ninnies have the lump of sugar at the bottom. Well, I suspect many of us have at one time or other eagerly looked forward for this same lump of sugar; but, thank goodness, the taste for sweets decreases as we grow older, until we come to that calm apathetic state that we can knock off in the midst of a sensational feast without having our mouths watering for the dessert.

IMITATION :

THE ACT OF FOLLOWING IN MANNER, OR OF COPYING IN FORM.

SOME folks say the Chinese, and some say the Russians are remarkably imitative people; but we need not look abroad for more apt imitators than we are ourselves; in this we are great, if there can be greatness in imitation. The aristocracy imitates royalty, the middle classes imitate the aristocracy, and the working-classes follow the wealthier classes at humble distance; straining and swelling, like the frog in the fable that essayed to equal the ox in size. The countless miserable shifts resorted to by vain imitative creatures would be altogether ludicrous, were they not so very pitiable. The wealthy middle class people with their ostentatious imitation of the upper ten thousand, and the less wealthy among them, in their turn, imitating the greater, all openly invite the contempt of all who are not smitten with this snobbish malady. Lower down in the social imitative system, the fag end of the genteel classes, who have but scanty incomes, pass their lives in miserable masquerade, to make others think them wealthier than they are. The working-classes share in the folly to some extent, and show it by dressing on Sundays like rich people. They seem to be content, however, with imitating the dress, for they make few attempts to imitate the manners of ladies and gentlemen, as they talk on Sundays with their every day vulgarity. The affectation in manners so often displayed by the vulgar rich is much more ridiculous, for a silk gown may hide a coarse shift, but no assumed manner can long hide an uncultured vulgar mind. Think of such an imitation as the Alexandra limp. Working girls have never been guilty of such idiotic folly. However, society in general must be responsible for all this straining and striving to appear wealthy or to rank higher than we are in the social scale, since it looks on poverty with contempt and aversion. We have imitations in literature too, which may not be quite so absurd, but the writers, like the fashionable fops who dress well at their tailors' expense, show off by means of other people's material, that they may have the credit and advantage pertaining of right to the owners thereof. These cunning frequenters of the fields of literature spare themselves the trouble of making pathways for themselves by treading in the footprints of others; and having no road-making difficulties to hamper them, tread boldly, and leave a deeper impress, which attracts the eyes that see only what is obvious, but such are in the heads of the many; hence those literary rs have their tens of thousands of purchasers.

Such a mode of tickling the public, and looking merely to the payable commodity is not highly conscientious or exceedingly honourable. But for this sort of thing society is also partly responsible, since it refuses to look at anything provided for its entertainment unless strong-flavoured, high-spiced, tempting dishes. But there are thousands of imitators in literature who are unconscious that they are so ; because their minds being not original, but imitative, they can do nothing else but imitate. As in the scale of being beneath reason we find instinct, so beneath originality we find imitation.

POET :

THE AUTHOR OF A POEM ; THE MAKER OR INVENTOR OF A METRICAL COMPOSITION ; ONE SKILLED IN MAKING POETRY.

THIS skill can only be acquired by study and exercise. It is a foolish notion of people who know no better, that a man may be born a poet and require no training. They mistake rhyme for poetry, and the jingle of the words at the termination of the lines is the only criterion by which they judge the art divine. That the art of poetry is much misunderstood is quite clear from the number of aspirants who send their first attempts to editors of journals for insertion. Of course they must believe these first fruits of *genius* worthy of publication, or they would not send them for that purpose. Now these same tyros estimate more justly the difficulty of mastering any of the ordinary arts. They would not, for instance, imagine that they could sit down and cut and finish 'a dress coat, or a pair of fashionable boots, at a first attempt in the arts of tailoring or boot-making. Every considerable town contains first-class artizans in these trades, but we may go through a good many towns before we meet with one first-class poet. This consideration, so obvious, never seems to occur to young poetical aspirants, else they would believe that the art of the poet was more difficult of attainment than the arts of the tailor and bootmaker. It is easier to perceive first-rate workmanship in these ordinary arts, than it is to see the perfection of the poetic art, which consists, so to speak, in concealing itself. In a masterpiece of poetry there is no display of art, no appearance of effort ; thoughts are clothed in words so appropriate that they seem their spontaneous expression—so that to the uninitiated, art and effort may seem to have nothing to do with it. Hence it is that the perfection of poetic art is totally invisible to a great many, and hence it is that they see no more difficulty in writing verses than getting words to chime

at the termination of the lines. But art alone, however perfect, will not constitute a true poet. It is but the mechanical part of poetry after all. It is the horse, not the rider; the telegraphic wire, not the mysterious fire that traverses it. As the electric fluid requires the conducting wire to guide it in its appointed journey, so does the poet, however highly charged with the divine *afflatus*, require a perfect medium of language to convey his glowing thoughts, like lightning flashes, to the minds of other men.

MONOTONY :

UNIFORMITY ; SAMENESS.

It takes us a long time to learn to like this sort of monotony. The child doesn't like it, the schoolboy detests it, the youth is impatient of it, and it is only after long training that the most of us learn to endure it without repining. Monotony preponderates in Nature, maugre all her changes, yet we her children have to be coaxed and forced to have our allotted portion of it, as if it were physic. Even the young colt shews a natural antipathy to it, and it takes a good deal of lashing to break him in till he can patiently hear behind him 'the lumber of the wheels!' When he has forgotten how to kick up his heels, and can go contentedly round with the threshing-mill, his education is complete. He has learned to endure monotony, if not to like it. Just so with us human creatures, for we too, when fairly broken in, no longer start to hear the whirr of the wheels of industry, and by the time we feel at home in the harness, we come rather to like the monotonous round of our daily life, and would feel uncomfortable if we were long out of the threshing mill. Monotony preponderates in the world of art, as in the world of nature. The business of life could not be carried on without it. The comforts of life depend upon it. It must alternate with enjoyment, or pleasure soon gives us the slip. He that finds content in it is tolerably comfortable, but he that can find pleasure in it, he indeed is a happy man, as happiness goes. He that rebels against it all his days, and hates it like poison, is in a bad case; society gives him the cold shoulder, he is beyond the pale of respectability, an outsider, and so he is held to belong either to the useless or the dangerous classes. Come, then, my young masters, learn to take your physic betimes, and don't make wry faces; don't think to shirk your share of monotony, and run away like cowards from the battle of life that you are about to enter, or you will be branded as *deserters*, and go to the dogs, or the devil.

THE GERMAN NATIONAL HYMN.

NEW VERSION.

WHICH is the German's Fatherland?
Is't Sleswick's land? Is't Holstein's land?
Is't where the Dutch dike back the sea ;
Where islands stud the Zuyder Zee?

 Oh ! no, no, no ;
 His Fatherland must wider go.

Which is the German's Fatherland ?
Silesia's, or Hanover's land ?
Is't where the Poles are German thralls ?
Is't where the Rhine in ocean falls ?

 Oh ! no, no, no, &c.

Where is the German's Fatherland ?
Beyond the Rhine, Alsacian land ?
Or is't Lorraine, or other fief,
Reft long ago by foreign thief ?

 Oh ! no, no, no, &c.

Which is the German's Fatherland ?
Come, name to me that mighty land ?
The Austrian land, where Danube flows,
Where Hapsburg rules his friends and foes ?

 Oh ! no, no, no, &c.

Which is the German's Fatherland ?
Now, name me that outspreading land ?
Where thanks in German tongue are given
For slaughtered men to God in Heaven ;

 There shall it be ;

 That land, brave German, won by thee.

And more the German land shall be :
Oh ! God of Heaven, hither see,
And give us genuine German soul,
That we may grasp it all and whole,
 That ours shall be,
 The whole that German land shall be.

NOTE TO THE GERMAN NATIONAL HYMN.

National hymns are but doggerel, or they would not be chanted by excited mobs, till they come to be called national. They appeal only to the passions, and hence they are passionately responded to. The patriotism they arouse is but a sort of national selfishness which craves glory or gain at the expense of other nations. The German Hymn stimulates the earth-hunger which sets the Teutonic mouth agape for Alsace and Lorraine, though these coveted morsels will most likely, if swallowed, give occasion for future wars. It seems as if the Germans, besides what they hold of other national territory, would claim all that ever was German. But compulsory restitution means nothing less than universal war. The French hymn, or national song, the Marseillaise, though considered revolutionary and dangerous, is morally less exceptionable, inasmuch as it excites, not to territorial robbery, but to resistance of invasion of native soil. As for our own National Anthem, sensible people are half ashamed of it, and never sing it but at large jovial parties, when their sober senses are somewhat diminished by strong potations. The interest felt by all readers in this terrible war between France and Prussia may excuse a longer note than the travesty of the German hymn deserves. When Napoleon the Third declared war against Prussia, he and his government were condemned by all reasonable men. They made arrogant demands which they must have known beforehand would be indignantly refused. Certain it is, had similar demands been made in such a way on France she would have taken the matter as a deliberate national insult. The arrogance of France was met by something like contempt by Prussia. Contempt is a bitter pill to a proud stomach, and so France declared war. Prussia, nothing loth, caught the gauntlet ere it fell. She knew she was better prepared than her enemy, and from her treatment of Denmark and Austria, and from her prolonging this war after the capitulation at Sedan, and the surrender of the Emperor; we cannot but conclude that she was as willing to fight as France, only that she cunningly let the Emperor and his ministers take all the odium of the war on their own heads. King William proclaimed that his quarrel was with them only, not with the French people. Then no considerations of policy should have hindered him from declaring his quarrel ended, when the ministers were expelled, and the Emperor had surrendered. The quibble about the legality of the provisional government is an excuse for more bloodshed admissible by neither God nor man. Prussia has given France no opportunity to elect a legitimate government. The king could have withdrawn his armies until France had chosen a government with which he could have treated for, what he calls, a permanent peace. But knock down your opponent, keep him down, and kick him when he is down, seems to be the Prussian policy. Some people say that France would have done the same by Prussia had she been victorious, which is just saying that the one is morally as bad as the other. There can be no permanent peace between them, unless France is permanently crippled, and remains unable to become an aggressor. So Prussia evidently thinks, and remorselessly is she following up the crippling policy. She had the sympathy of the civilized world on her side till the surrender at Sedan, and history will hold her right thus far, but I think no further. On the heads of the Emperor and his government, therefore, lies all the bloodshed till that surrender. On the heads of King William and his councillors lies all the blood shed afterwards. No questions of policy can suspend

the command of the Eternal 'Thou shalt not kill.' The Emperor, though our very good ally, was not much liked in this country. He had gradually, however, acquired a high character for profound policy, but after the Mexican affair he began to sink in our estimation of his sagacity. His late declaration of war, and its results, have shewn that he was neither acquainted with his own resources nor with those of Prussia, and have demonstrated his incapacity as a military leader, despite his life-long study of war. Although not what is called bloodthirsty, as an individual, yet as a ruler he has shewn the true Bonaparte disregard of human life. His sympathies are with Cæsar and Napoleon, with the princes of war, not with the Prince of Peace. Such a man must always be a dangerous ruler. He asserts that France was bent on war, and he was unwillingly obliged to yield to her demands, and become her mouthpiece in declaring war. Did he *try* to oppose her? Had he *tried* and failed, and *fallen* in consequence, his fall, however it might have affected France, would have obtained the sympathy and admiration of all men worthy of the name. But he has admitted his inability to control her in this instance, and so to please her, 'cried Havoc! and let slip the dogs of war.' But what shall we say of the King of Prussia? Is he a wise and humane ruler? He seems to delight in war. He surely could have long ago ended this vindictive vengeance. It can no longer be called defensive war by Prussia. This prolonged slaughter for what she calls a material guarantee is simply horrible. Because former kings and ministers of France were robbers of German territory, the present generation of that hated country must be butchered and starved, till Lorraine and Alsace are restored to Germany. Admitting that France has been a bad neighbour; should we kill all bad neighbours to keep them quiet? King William and his two Mephistopheles have made the Germans pay dear for their pet notion of a united Germany, which has been a great means of success in this war. They are recovering provinces at a fearful price. The Crowned Homicides and their abettors must divide the awful responsibility. There are a hundred thousand Burke's, Hares, Jones', and Traupans compressed into Napoleon of France, and William of Prussia.

[The reader will see that this note was written when men's minds were agitated by that terrible war. Its indignant tone, therefore, has no resemblance to the calmness of history. However, as it expresses the prevailing feelings of those I conversed with at the time, let it remain.]

THE EMIGRANT TO HIS LASS.

I AM far awa, my lassie,
Far awa beyond the sea,
But the dear auld land you live in
Ever will be dear to me.

I have sent you what I promised,
Keep to me your promise true ;
I'll be lookin' for your comin',
Weary waitin', lass, for you.

Though your letters come to cheer me,
Yet a hame this winna be
Till you come yoursel', my lassie—
Come, and mak' it hame to me.

Were you here indeed, my lassie,
Here about the break o' day ;
Did I only dream I kissed you,
And you never said me nay ?

O but that was tantalizin',
In a land so wide awake—
Haste you o'er the sea, my lassie,
Haste you, for your lover's sake.

Weel I lo'e our puir auld Scotland,
Lo'e her weel though far awa,
And I never wad hae left her
But for wage and ration sma'.

Here I'm in a land o' plenty,
Though a lanely land it be,
Haste you, haste you here, my lassie,
Come, and mak' it hame to me.

THE REVEREND FERGUS FERGUSON.

HIS flock gets a psalm of David to sing
From the Reverend Fergus Ferguson,
Then he takes his text from the preacher-king,

Does the Reverend Fergus Ferguson,—
Not a word of Uriah, how he had to go,—
Or of Solomon's ladies that bothered him so,
Of his altars to Venus, and Moloch and co—
From the Reverend Fergus Ferguson.

He takes up his stand by the minstrel kings,
Does the Reverend Fergus Ferguson—
And down to our days with a vengeance springs

He, the Reverend Fergus Ferguson—
The fame of the famous he mangles and spurns,
Like a vile highland adder he wriggles and turns,
And he bites at the dust of our own Robert Burns,
Does the Reverend Fergus Ferguson.

He puts back the hair from the slope of his face,
Does the Reverend Fergus Ferguson,

Now the blood and the bile are running a race
In the Reverend Fergus Ferguson.

The venom, the froth, and the offal are flung
Abroad from that unruly member, the tongue,
On all that the Bard ever did, said, or sung,
By the Reverend Fergus Ferguson.

Now Sandy o' Scotland wha have you to blame
For your Reverend Fergus Fergusons ?

You pay for such preachers as make you think
shame,

As your Reverend Fergus Fergusons.
A sensible sermon you'll buy for a plack,
Yet pounds you will pay to such blockheads in
black—
Send your preaching lunatics to Bedlam—in fact,
A' your Reverend Fergus Fergusons.

NOTE TO THE REV. FERGUS FERGUSON.

When these verses were published in the 'Arbroath Guide,' chancing to see Colonel Burns' address in the 'Dundee Advertiser,' I forwarded him a copy of the paper, and received the subjoined reply. Now I hold it wrong to print a private letter without the writer's permission, but the good old man has followed his celebrated father to the tomb; and I give his letter publicity to show how a wanton attack on the character of the dead may hurt the feelings of an aged relative on the brink of the grave.

3 Berkeley Street, Cheltenham, 9th March 1869.

MY DEAR SIR,—Allow me to return you my best thanks for your admirable castigation of the Rev. Fergus Ferguson. I never read a more malignant attack upon any man's character than his upon the dead Poet; and to give it from his pulpit, too, on a Sunday, and ask a blessing on his words as if it had been on a chapter from the Bible! He was an obscure young man, but no one, I think, will envy him the notoriety he has obtained from the Scottish press. I have shown your verses to several Englishmen as well as Scotchmen. All think them very good indeed—severe, but just.—I am, yours truly,

W. H. BURNS.

THE FENIAN INVASION OF CANADA.

IMPROVED VERSION.

- ‘ COME all ye Irish pathriots, come on from all the States,
And rally round ould Ireland’s flag, that England fears and hates ;
On her colonial borders now that flag shall be unfurled,
And ye shall have your vengeance in the sight of all the world.
- ‘ Your gallant leaders all are fired with ardour for the cause,
Away with rule and raison, and away with kings and laws—
Come, heroes of the brotherhood, come up like locusts, come,
And clear the stores of Canada of biscuit, beef and rum.
- ‘ What tho’ the doomed Canadians have never done you wrong,
They’re mostly of the hated race that hath oppressed you long ;
To spite the Saxon Britishers, we’ll shoot them in revenge,
And for their farms we’ll give them graves, an Irishman’s exchange.
- ‘ John Bull is, in his Island, fenced with garrisons in arms,
But he is vulnerable here, in his outlying farms ;
To liberate ould Ireland, then, to Canada we go,
And sure the tyrant bears the blame, when we will work her woe.
- ‘ March, march, heroic Fenians ! there is no guarded gate,
There’s not a dog of British breed an Irish charge will wait,—

Your feet are on the borderland, now shoot the
Saxons down,
The spoils of the Dominion, bould heroes, are
your own !

‘The frontier line is passed, hurra ! we’re in the
promised land !

See, by the powers, the inimy !—Sure, give us the
command—

Is’t forward boys, or wheel about ? Where is the
brave O’Naile ?

‘He’s in the Marshal’s carriage sure, and drove
away to Jail.’

‘Och ! thunder, but we are betrayed !’ In vain
their noble rage ;

It was not Irish shooting here, from out behind a
hedge ;

So the host of Fenian heroes all, threw down their
arms and fled,

Before a score of volunteers, with a captain at
their head.

Hurra ! the grand invasion, that belongs to history
now,
Gives another Paddy-laurel to the bould Milesian
brow,
Though many sons of Ireland may hang their heads
in shame,
And disown the filibusters, as a slur upon her
name.

Yet, hurra for poor ould Ireland, and her pathriotic
sons,
Who so long subscribed for arms, and so soon threw
down their guns ;
Och ! pity that their precious lives in raids should
be imperilled,
Though if the race were off the earth, 'twould be a
quieter world.

THE GHOSTLY HOUSE O' DRUMLY.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE FLOOD.

THE old House of Drumly was the residence at one time of Gavin Taply, or, as he was commonly called, Gaun Tap, and his wife Chirsty, who seldom had the honour to be called Mrs Taply. The old manor house is now ruinous, and even then it was in a dilapidated condition, but it certainly offered superior accommodation to the cot formerly occupied by the old couple. Houses were not very plentiful on the lands of Drumly, and for sometime previous to their entrance into the old manor house they had been housed in the workmen's bothy at the quarry, which had not been worked for some years. Perched on a rubbish heap, and built of pavement chips, the bothy shewed that it was the work of builders who were independent of mortar. The dry stone dikers, however, had done their work well, of its kind. The walls stood firm, and bore up the roof without shewing any signs of distress. It was not the builders' fault that the wind whistled through the open stone-work, and carried the rain along with it, till the plaster inside was soaked with water. In summer the house was tolerably free from damp, as it had a dry foundation, but for the greater part of the year, a rank crop of mould would grow on Gaun's Sunday shoes, as they lay at rest through the week. No wonder the old folks complained of rheumatism ; but the complainings of the old are incomprehensible to the young, so they are considered on a par with the fretfulness of childhood. Having delivered myself of this sage reflection, I hasten to unfold the cause why Gaun Tap and his wife left their humble dwelling in Drumly quarry. It was neither cold nor damp, nor rheumatic pains, though they had felt all these, that impelled them to leave it ; neither was it ambition to inhabit a more imposing edifice, but the irresistible force of necessity, to which poor mortals must bow in this plaguey world. In short they were driven out by the flood ; I mean the great flood of 1829, that swept away so many bridges, and turned haughs and howes into lochs of drumly water. The roads were turned into burns, the burns into rivers, and the rivers into firths. It seemed as if the world

was to be drowned once more. No rainbow appeared in the murky sky, and folks began to think that the blue heaven was blotted out for ever. Now Gaun, while he pitied the poor bodies whose houses were down by the water courses, never dreamed that the terrible enemy would besiege him and his wife in the quarry bothy. Was it not built high on a rubbish hillock, remote from burns and rivers, set up in a high-lying quarry, and sheltered by precipitous rocks? But then the fields, on every side save one, inclined toward the quarry: every rig lay between two runlets, these runlets became tributaries to the ditches, and these again united their waters and became torrents, which rushed down the incline and were rapids, down to the cliffs: then cataracts, tumbling, rowing and foaming into the quarry pool. 'Preserve us, such a climax,' some may exclaim; but it was no laughing matter to poor Gann Tap and his gudewife. There had been a deep pool in the quarry for years, but now it was twenty feet deeper than ever it was before, and it was widening all around. The rising water was now chafing and gurgling above the base of the rubbish heap, whereon stood the poor bodies' solitary tenement—it was sapping the outworks of Gann Tap's ricketty castle.

'O, man!' exclaimed Chirsty, 'will you no gae out, and see if the water's aye risin' yet?'

Gaun went out accordingly, and examined his landmarks, then returned with the alarming intelligence, that it was rising faster and faster.

'The Lord preserve us!' exclaimed the affrighted woman, 'I winna lie down in a bed this nicht.'

'Tut, woman,' said Gaun, 'hunders o' thousands o' tons o' water, mair than's come yet, winna bring the quarry hole up to our door. Tak' ye my word for't.'

But Chirsty would not take her gudeman's word for't. She would not go to bed, and Gaun was obliged, perforce, to keep her company by the fire. Before midnight they were surrounded by water. They were the only inhabitants of an island. No, not the only inhabitants. They became aware that they had more company than they cared for. Their house was invaded by a swarm of vermin, that had been driven out of their holes by the rising water.

'Hae a care o' us!' exclaimed Chirsty, 'hearken to the rottens. Whaur hae they a' come frae? Pussy, pussy.'

But puss would not be cajoled into familiarity. The very cat was dumbfounded and cowed.

Gaun shook his head, and said, 'They're no rottens, Chirsty. I ken the squeal o' a rotten weel eneugh. Look there.'

He pointed to the wooden press, and Chirsty looking in that direction, saw, to her terror, little red hairy creatures peering from under it.

'O, Gaun,' she whispered, 'they're whittrets. I'm frightened at them. What'll we do?'

'Just sit still till daylight,' he said. 'The creatures are as frightened as we are. They hae ta'en refuge frae the flood, puir things; and if Noah could put up wi' teegars and serpents in the ark for sax weeks, we can surely put up wi' twa or three whittrets in our house for ae nicht. Besides it mightna be very canny to try and drive them out when they hae nae i'her refuge; sae we'll never let on that we see them. We'll no meddle wi' them, and I'll warrant they'll no meddle wi' us.'

All that night, in spite of Gaun's assurance, both he and Chirsty sat in great trepidation, and listened to their cries, that sounded somewhat between squeaking and whistling, and ever and anon, a little red head with fiery eyes, would peer at them from under bed or press. By and bye, as their numbers increased, they grew bolder; occasionally some of the audacious vermin would dart out to the middle of the floor, and fix their wicked little eyes on the two frightened faces by the fire. They seemed to have no fear of the venerable household cat, as they ignored her presence altogether. That sage grimalkin had taken up her station on the hearth, by her mistress's chair; an occasional rising of the back being the only indication she gave to shew that she was aware of those intruders on her hunting ground. Doubtless she knew they were too nearly allied to her own kind to be her natural prey. Indeed, she seemed to fear them more than they feared her.

The long looked for day dawned at length, after that strange night watch, and Gaun got up, urged by Chirsty's whispered entreaties, making a noise with his chair to scare the creatures. He took his wife by the arm and said,

'Come awa, then, Chirsty, out o' this house, and let us try to save our lives. Better be drowned thereout than sit here till we be worried and eaten by vermin.'

They went out, but few words passed between them, as they looked around and saw nothing but rocks and water.

'Get on my back, Chirsty,' said Gaun; 'dinna be fleyed, for I ken the road weel, and ken that I can wade it. Grip me round the neck, but dinna choke me, though; and now for the ford.'

And away went the tough old man with his gudewife on his broad back; now up to his knees, now to his haunches, but soon the water got shallower, and still more so, as he toiled up the incline, till at length he set down his precious burden, not exactly on dry land, for there was none, but on a dripping rock that yet held its head above the quarry pool. Chirsty, greatly agitated, poor body, sat down on the wet stone, and breathed a thanksgiving for their deliverance. They soon made their way to a neighbour's house

roused up the sleeping inmates, and were received with wonder, and kindly entertained.

When the day was sufficiently advanced, Gaun, now refreshed, and with his clothes dried, lost no time in repairing to the house of Drumlyford, so called from the united estates of Ford and Drumly, and made his plaint to the laird. When, in stating his case, he came to tell of the invasion of his house by a swarm of whitrets, the laird opened his eyes wide, and on hearing the whole story, broke out into a hearty laugh, and asked him if it was really the case that those vermin had mistaken his house for the ark, and himself for the patriarch Noah?

'Weel, sir, they took refuge frae the flood in our house, at onyrate, said Gaun. I dinna ken how Noah had liket his queer passengers, but gude troth I didna care muckle for the little red deevils takin refuge wi' us, I assure you, sir. They were wild wi' fright, and savage at being turned out o' their holes, and I verily believe if I had attackit them wi' a stick they wad hae flown upon me and Chirsty baith. If we had haen a terrier dog, but I daursay it wad hae been o' little use, for the creatures can vanish out o' sight into crevices where naething bigger than themsel's could follow them. At onyra'e, our cat was o' nae use, for she wadna hae onything to do wi' them.'

'I dare say, Gavin, the cat knew they were her distant relations; had they been rats she would have faced them in another fashion, no doubt. Well, since you have been expelled by water and wild beasts, we must conclude that your position was untenable. But where am I to put you? That's the question. By the bye, there's the old house of Drumly; it is not in good habitable order, certainly, but I can offer you no better, indeed, no other accommodation just now. You are aware that it is a sort of half granary, half lumber-house now, but you might turn things about, and make room for yourselves somehow. You can get any little necessary repairs done afterwards. What say you to that Gavin?'

'Mony thanks, sir. 'I'm blithe o' the offer, and sae I'm sure will be Chirsty. We'll fit into the House o' Drumly as soon as we can get our bits o' things out o' the auld bothy.'

'Well, that's settled,' said the laird, 'but remember Gavin, the old house has not a very good name. You will find, I believe, that there are rats to encounter, and if old stories are true, there are ghosts too. Do you believe in ghosts, Gavin?'

'Tut, sir, believe or no believe, we maun tak' our chance. I hae been weel acquainted wi' the auld house for mony a year, and it wad be strange if I couldna bide in't. You forget, sir, that I lived in't langsyne. The ghosts will

neither worry us nor drown us, and we can say our prayers afore we gae to our bed.'

'Very true, Gavin. As for the rats, Mrs Taply can take the cat to bed with her for protection.'

'Deed, sir, Chirsty doesna like ony bedfellow that has mair than twa legs.'

And with this clincher ended Gaun's interview with the laird.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE.

WHEN the waters were sufficiently abated to let them get their furniture removed, the old folks took possession of the House of Drumly. Now Gaun Tap did not feel altogether at his ease in the old house, although he professed to be perfectly satisfied with his domicile. Had he really been sceptical in the matter of ghosts, or could he, though believing, have cast out fear, all might have been well with him, and he might have emboldened Chirsty by his brave example; but though he shewed a bold face to his neighbours, she knew his weak side in this matter. No timid man is a hero to his wife. She can see through her gude-man fully as well as a valet can look through a Lord Dundreary. Neither can a man be long a hero to his neighbours, if he be over-anxious to establish a reputation for courage. A brave man does not talk much of his bravery, or ostentatiously disclaim all acquaintance with fear; nor does an honest man prate about his honesty, and special exemption from the sin of covetousness. Those who act in such a way betray an inner consciousness of defect. They also betray an ignorance of human nature, as they thereby direct attention to the vulnerable part of their moral anatomy, by their anxious efforts to divert it otherwise, which in the long run serves only to rivet attention on the points that he would fain hide from observation. Just so the Peeseweip, poor silly bird, by her erratic circles and her anxious cries, endeavours to wile us away from her nest, and by these very means sets us to look for her too anxiously guarded treasure. And so it came to pass that Gaun, fearing to be thought to fear, did bluster a little, and defy, especially in daylight, all the ghosts that ever were seen, or said to be seen, about the old House of Drumly. And so it naturally happened that his friends at length began to look on this peculiarity rather curiously, and just as naturally they saw, or thought they saw, some signs of a quaking heart and whitey-brown liver; these organs being known to be thus affected when the pluck is not what it

should be. But it must not be supposed that Gaun was a craven for all that, and shrank from facing the ordinary dangers to which he, as other men, might be exposed. He could face a surly bull, or bridle a vicious horse as bravely as any man about the place ; but these dangers, from being familiar, he had learned to treat with contempt, so he never alluded to them. It was the unwonted, and the undefined that 'cowed his better part of man.' He had retreated from the former, that beset him in the quarry, and now he had to face the latter, wrapt in the mystery of the invisible world, in the ghostly old House of Drumly. He had heard of its traditions, fifty years ago, when he was errand boy in the old laird's time ; and it was believed that he once saw something, though he could not be brought to speak decidedly on the subject. Neither did he care to say that he had seen, in this very house, his old master, Captain Ford, sitting in his arm-chair stark dead, with his throat cut from ear to ear. The chair of the suicide was yet to be seen among the lumber in the garret, with its cover and stuffing tattered, and blood-stained. This unfortunate gentleman was the last of his family who inhabited the 'ouse of Drumly. He was said to have been subject to fits of insanity, brought on or aggravated by long bouts of drinking. He had been disgraced and cashiered for some misconduct in the army ; it was not well known for what, but it was generally whispered that his presence of mind failed him at a particular juncture. However, he was dismissed from the service, and it was understood that it was only through powerful influence that he escaped with life. He came home and lived for a time with his elder brother, the late laird, at Drumlyford, but it seemed they could not agree, so he took up his residence in 'the House of Drumly, that had been the old lady's jointure house. Gaun Tap, in his youth, had been servant to Captain Ford, to whom his wife had been housekeeper. Hence they were supposed to know more of the family history than they cared to acknowledge. It was believed that Gaun was not far out of the way when the Captain, in one of his mad fits, stabbed Johnstone the groom with a hay fork, in the stable. After what little examination the matter underwent, it was settled that the groom, who was then dead, had been the aggressor, and that the Captain had wounded him in self-defence. Gaun was suspected of giving evidence favourable to his master, or of suppressing what might have been unfavourable ; but most likely these suspicious notions proceeded from envy, or from the natural propensity of human nature to judge uncharitably. Perhaps they partly proceeded from the fact that Gavin Taply, and his wife, Christian Boath or Taply, had twenty pounds a-year settled on them for their lives, *jointly and severally*, together with a house rent-free on the

land of Drumlyford, in consideration of long and faithful service. Now, though our old gentry were often mindful of their old servant, this seemed to be such an exceptionally liberal settlement, that the gossips could not believe that it was awarded for honest service alone, but that there must have been secret services besides, which were nameless, and of course could not be creditable. Gaun was aware of these unfavourable notions of his neighbours ; he was also aware, in spite of their obliging help at his flitting, that they secretly enjoyed his discomfiture by flood and whittrets, as their gibes left him in no doubt of the fact. He also felt that they assisted him with malicious satisfaction, in the hope that he would be routed next out of the old manor house, by the rats and ghosts that had haunted it from time immemorial. So Gaun took counsel with himself and his wife, and knowing thus far how matters stood, they agreed between them to confess to no annoyance, and to show no signs of uneasiness, however they might be troubled in their minds by anything they might see or hear, lest their mocking neighbours should make them the laughing-stocks of the country side. But, for all that, they began to feel rather uneasy, for the black embers of Drumly superstition were not extinguished, but only smouldering in their minds ; and these had been all raked up by the officiousness of pretended sympathisers. And now, as they sat by the fire, they, with memories thus refreshed, recalled all, and more than all, that they had heard through the day, all they had heard through life, of what had been done, and what had been seen and heard in the ghostly House of Drumly.

There was the skeleton of a child said to have been found in a wall press, when the stones were removed with which it had been built up, and the ghostly mother had been seen gliding through the room, and wringing her fleshless hands. The ghost of the suicide haunted the parlour where he did the deed, and also the cellar below. Back from the parlour there was a small room that had been a sort of store room, or butler's pantry. From that there was a narrow stair, in the thickness of the wall, leading down to the cellar, but it had been built up after the Captain's death. It seemed, however, that stone and lime offered no impediment to ghostly feet, as a muffled slip-shod tread had been heard, up and down from pantry to cellar, and a rumbling of shaken barrels, and drawing of spigots, followed by a rushing of liquors that, like the fruit of Tantalus, of course, for ever evaded the bloodless lips of the ghostly toper.

All this, and much more, Gaun had heard, and made light of, before he and his wife became domiciled in the House of Drumly ; but now that his assumed scepticism was to be put to the proof in this questionable abode, he wished he had not spoken so contemptuously of its reputed

frequenter. Here he was, however, and must make the best of it. He continued to aver that he 'saw naething waur than himself,' and the rats were accountable for any noise that he heard. Chirsty, poor body, was not quite so reticent, though being on her guard lest the neighbours should turn them into ridicule, she condescended on nothing particular, but, with many a shake of the head, intimated that if she would she 'could a tale unfold.' And thus they remained till the long winter nights crept in upon them in the old House of Drumly.

CHAPTER THIRD.

THE FAMILY COUNCIL.

In the town of Dundee, when it had its meadow for bleaching clothes, when its old streets held all the living inhabitants, and its Houff held all the dead, there was a shop situated in the Thorter Row, well filled with home-made cloth, both for household use and personal wear ; for those that still clung to the notion that the real hamit claithe wad wear three times as lang as the flimsy fabrics made in factories. Over the door might be read, 'Andrew Taply, Home Cloth Manufacturer.' Now young folks may hastily assume that there could hardly be a living to be got by such an antiquated business, but in those days there was a prejudice still lingering, especially among old people, in favour of the home-made article, and against fabrics of factory production, and these were sufficiently numerous to support Andrew Taply in a comfortable trade. So he did a fair business in a canny way, and brought up his family respectably. The eldest girls were out in service, as their parents would not permit them to go to the mill, and had no idea of making their daughters fine ladies, as our shopkeepers have now-a-days. Their eldest son, Robert, however, was a merchant's clerk, by way of compromise with the times ; and the second was a sailor, greatly against the wishes of both father and mother ; but Jack was a wilful chap, who would have his own way, and mostly got it too.

While this comfortable family were seated at tea on a winter evening, Mrs Taply, who was a lively bustling body, said to her husband,

'Now, if you are done with your tea, Andrew, read us Grandmother's letter.'

'Weel, Jean,' he replied, 'you ken Granny is nae great hand at writing, though she's rather better than Grandfather ; however, I'll manage to gie you the substance o' her letter. It seems she is not taking weel wi' the House

o' Drumly, though we thought the twa auld folks wad be much better there than in the quarry bothy. She speaks o' being disturbed at night wi' strang^a noises, and complains that she is quite done up for want of rest. Now, I dinna wonder at noises being heard in the auld house. The doors and windows are broken and disjointed, and they will rattle wi' the wind, and be best heard at night. Besides, they used to keep grain in the upper flats, and I suppose there will be plenty of rats.'

'I couldna sleep where they were,' said Mrs Taply.

'It's not comfortable, certainly,' observed Mr Taply. 'But Granny says there are sounds forby the noise of the rats, sounds louder and mair fearfu', that are a' thegither unaccountable. Grandfather is of the same mind, it seems, but insists on keeping silence on the matter, especially as they left their last house for causes by common. He thinks were they now to leave the House o' Drumly, scared out by rats and ghosts, they would be laughed at by the whole parish. And besides a' that, they hae nae ither house to gang till.'

'By Jove,' exclaimed Jack, 'I should like to overhaul the old trap.'

Jack was at home learning navigation in winter ; at least, he pretended to be learning. Neither ships nor sailors can afford to be laid up in winter in our day.

'Well, Jack,' said his father, 'I see naething to hinder you, for a' you are doin'. Bob and you might gang and see the auld folk about Yule ; that is to say if Bob could get awa'. They want your mither and me, but I dinna see how we could gae, a' things considered.'

'I couldna leave the house to the bairns, and we couldna tak' them wi' us at this time o' year,' said Mrs Taply.

'And I cauna weel get awa' either,' rejoined Mr Taply. 'But as the puir auld folks seem to be in trouble, some o' us should gae. What say you, Bob ? You dinna seem to be interested in the matter.'

'O, but I am interested,' replied Bob. 'I was just thinking of asking our manager for three days at Christmas. You know I can only count upon one, and that wouldn't do.'

'I say, Bob, come over the old fogie on the sly,' said Jack. 'Tell him that you've got to lay a ghost, and that can't be done in a handclap.'

'Wheesht, Johnnie,' cautioned his mother, 'you shouldna mak' a mock o't. You may get a fright yoursel' yet.'

'There must be some mischief goin' on,' observed Andrew Taply, looking again at the letter. 'Granny mentions ae thing which convinces me of that. The bed-clothes had been pulled off the bed, and thrown on the

middle of the floor. Now, neither rats nor ghosts would be likely to do that, at onyrate.'

'Whew,' cried Jack, 'I see it.'

'Ay,' responded Bob, 'the thing's clear. We'll find it out, Jack.'

'Won't we, my boy,' quoth Jack. 'The rascally hob-nails must be playing tricks upon the old folks. We'll find out what's what. I'll overhaul the old hulk from keel to truck, and if I don't come within hail of the ghost, my name's not Jack Taply.'

'Now, Johnnie, dinna be rash,' said Mrs Taply. 'Bob, you'll hae to lo'k after him; you're aulder, and should hae mair prudence.'

'Why, mother, I've got more of that commodity than you're aware of. Haven't I, Bob?'

'Well, Jack, you're not quite so mad as you seem to be sometimes. We'll see how you conduct yourself.'

'I'll conduct myself like a jolly old captain, my boy. So Bob, you'll sail under my orders—sealed orders, remember—till we make out the bearings of the enemy.'

'No, no, Jack; no sealed orders.'

'Well, if you shew some of that prudence of yours, as well as pluck, I may call you to council.'

'Now, lads,' said their father, 'you see how it is; the auld folk are being annoyed somehow. I canna council you, as you must be guided by circumstances after you get to Drumly. Only be cautious. Dinna let out that you have heard of such a matter, or the mischievous rogues wad be on their guard. If you rid the auld folk o' this annoyance, you will do them a gude turn, and I'll tak' it as an obligation to mysel'. So tak' council thegither, and do the best you can.'

'Depend upon that, father,' said Bob.

'Well,' said Jack seriously, 'I'll lay aside all nonsense, and go on an earnest tack for once. Never fear, father; Bob and I will settle the matter. Why, I've read all about 'The Cock Lane Ghost,' and so should know something of them gentry.'

It was then settled at the family council that if Bob could get leave of absence for two or three days, the two young men should set out for Drumly before Christmas. After they were in bed they continued to talk of their intended visit.

'I say, Bob, won't we have glorious fun?'

'We can't say, Jack, you know, till we see how the land lies, as your phrase goes.'

'Of course. Well, Bob, we'll suppose we find out that, so let's be prepared for action. I've got a capital fause face already. If it's not like the devil, it ought to be, as it's ugly enough. I must get a pair of horns somehow, to help

to complete the likeness. I'll have some phosphorus to smear over mask and horns, till they glow with purgatorial fire, and outshine all the deils and ghosts of Drumly. I'll get a dark cloak from Granny to cover my infernal appearance till the proper moment, and then—you'll see if I don't frighten the ghosts. I'll take my pistol too, and lots of powder.'

'I don't believe in the pistol, John, my man. Do you want to be hanged for shooting a ghost?'

'I'll riddle him, Bob; only riddle him about the legs, you know, and serve him right. Why should any clod-hopper go and frighten old folk in such a manner? I'll pepper him, by Jove.'

'But the ghost, if there be one, may be proof against shot, Jack.'

'Don't you, Bob, try to put me off my course with that blarney. The ghost that pulled off the blankets sups brose, my fine fellow, and so he can't be proof against powder and shot.'

'Well, Jack, we'll hear a full and particular account of the ghosts of Drumly, when we get there. Meanwhile, we'll go to sleep, and dream of frightful apparitions till morning.'

'I'll dream of phosphorus and gunpowder,' replied Jack, 'and so, good night.'

CHAPTER FOURTH.

ON the second night thereafter the two lads were seated by the fire in the smoky kitchen of the old house of Drumly.

Gaun Tap and his wife were rather disappointed. They had expected their sedate son, Andrew, who was well up in years and as grave as an owl, and, instead of him, here were their lively young grandsons; but they made the young men very welcome notwithstanding. The old man was rather chary of his communications at first, but Granny soon opened the floodgates of her mind, and the pent-up tide now swept away all reservations. Gaun made a show of obstruction for a time, but at length gave way, and went along with the current. They had now earnest and sympathising listeners of their own kin, their natural allies, and perfect confidence was soon established between them. The lads, by previous concert, forbore all irreverent laughter; expressed no incredulity, and yet showed no trepidation, so that the old folks became quite cheery, and began to hope that somehow they were now to be relieved of all their troubles.

'But when did these disturbances begin?' asked Bob.

'Weel Robbie,' said Granny, 'I'll tell you the very beginnin' o' them. When we cau' in here I was prepared for some din, for I jaloused there were rottens about the auld house; but we hae a gude cat, and I wasna *sae* feared at them as the whittret creatures. But the cat, like a' her kind, was swere to flit, and that was the mair surprisin' as she likit ill h'r neebours i' the quarry; howsoever for some nights she ran out and wadna bide here. Weel, we heard the rottens rinnin' ower our heads, and squealin' and makin' an unco din; but thinks I, if we had the cat fairly flittit, we'll soon be free o' that racket. But that very night we were roused up wi' a great flappin' din ben in the parlour, that a' the rottens in creation couldna hae equalled. Gaun got up and strak a licht, and I got up too, for I couldna bide still. We stood on the floor and listened for a time, and aye we heard the ither thud on door or window. At length Gaun took up the poker in the ae hand and the crusie in the ither, and says he, 'In the Lord's name we'll see what it can be.' Weel, he made for the parlour door, and I gaed ahint hin, for I couldna bide here alone. He banged up the room door, a flapp o' wings blew out the light, and we baith staggered back into the kitchen. He lightit the licht again, and I beggit him no to tempt Providence ony mair; but in perfect desperation he gaed ben and lookit round the room, and syne he hang up the licht on the mantel, and—but you'll laugh at me, laddies, when I tell you—I heard a great flappin' o' wings and a 'caw,' and but the house cam' Gaun wi' that creature there in his twa hands.'

'What,' exclaimed Jack, 'this fellow, the jackdaw, the kae?'

'Just the same, laddie. The creature had fa'en down the lum, and brought a great heap o' sticks and soot down wi't. The house was fu' o' reek the first night we were here, and that had disturbit it in the chimley tap, it's likely. Weel I wat that unlucky bird was but the beginnin' o' our troubles here. Gaun cuttit its wings, and it's tame eneugh now. The profane loons about the town ca' it 'Gaun Tap's deevil.' 'Caw.' Do you hear the creature? I declare it kens the name.'

'Caw,' cried Jack, 'come here, old fellow, and make friends.'

'No doubt the adventure of the kae had prompted the spirit of mischief,' observed Bob.'

'Ay, ay,' enjoined Gaun, 'the rascals just needed a hair to mak' a tether o'.'

'But though we can account for the comin' o' the kae,' said Granny, 'there are ither things about this house a' the-gither unaccountable.'

'But didn't you live in this house, you and grandfather, when you were young?' inquired Jack. 'Were there any disturbances then?'

'Na, na, Johnnie; but you maun ken that was before the captain's unhappy end, puir man, and besides there was plenty o' company then about the auld house, and we wad hae sleepit at night in yon time o' life though drums had been beaten at our lugs.'

'But you'll not sleep so sound now, Granny,' observed Bob, 'and so you will easily be disturbed at night.'

'You may say that, Robbie. Truly does your namesake, Robbie Burns, say,

'O age has weary days,
And nights o' sleepless pain.'

I was just readin' that the ither nicht. Puir fallow, he didna live till auld age, but he kenn'd a' about it ower weel, I daursay.'

'It must be very wearisome,' observed Jack, 'to lie awake and hear every sound that breaks the silence of the night.'

'Ay, Johnnie, as I hae experienced mony a nicht, mair especially in this house. I mind the secoud nicht we were here I fell sound asleep, for I was tired wi' scrubbin' and cleanin', but weel I wat I was waukent wi' a vengeance. There was a trailin' o' sacks o' corn, or sounds sic like, just aboon our heads, and a trampin' o' feet that had nae shoon on them I thocht; maybe it was feet that never wore shoon. There was the fillin' o' the firlot, as if they were measurin' the grain, and atween hands was heard a grane, as if some unhappy creature was labourin' under a cruel taskmaster. Gaun and me lay and listened, for I waukened him, you may be sure; and at length he cried out, 'Wha's there?' when the din was hushed for a minute, and then there was a grane that made my very flesh creep, and after that the trailin' din began again; it gaed out o' that room, and across the landin', and into the Captain's bed-room and syne ower a' the house. Gaun raise and lichtet the crusie, and spak' o' goin' up the stair to see what it was; but I wadna let him, and in troth he didna persist. How could I hae been left here alone without losin' my judgment?'

'No wonder you were afraid, Granny,' said Bob.

'But, Grandfather, didn't you overhaul the house next day?' inquired Jack.

'I did that, laddie. I wad hae gaen up the stair that nicht wi' the licht to see what it was, but, to tell the truth, I wasna very keen upon venturin' up, for I dreaded some mischievous loons were in the house, and rather than be found out they wad hae flung me and the crusie down the stair. And if it was onything waur,' he added naively, 'I

thocht it wad be ful-hardy to seek them that were permitted to come here unsought.'

'Very true, Grandfather,' responded Jack demurely, 'but didn't you think of taking the Bible in your hand.'

'I did think o' that, Johnnie, but you see I wad hae needit a' hand to carry the crusie, and the ither ane to fend the light frae the draughts, so that I couldna weel hae carried the buik.'

'But you went up next morning,' said Bob. 'Was there no appearance to shew that some persons had been there overnight?'

'I saw nae sign o' that Robbie, and it made me no very easy in my mind. There war twa or three bows o' beare in the corner o' the auld dinin'-room, but there war nae sacks that I could see.'

'Weel I wat, laddies, that was but the first nicht o' mony sic like,' said Granny. 'I haena gotten a sound nicht's rest, I may say, sin' we cam' to this house. There's aye din o' some kind, ilka nicht, maistly, but some nichts it's awfu'. Whiles the house is a' hushed, you wad hear naething but the clock tickin', syne a' at aince it comes, crack, crack, as if the very kipples were weary o' bearing up the auld roof aboon our heads; at ither times, there will be a clatterin' o' feet, as if a flock o' sheep were rinnin' through the house, and then, again, the trailin' o' sacks, and the granes atween hands. Mony a nicht hae I lain in my bed like to faint wi' fear, and often hae I thocht, I'll be out o' this house gin the morn war here, though I should lie thereout. But Gaun aye says we wad be made a warld's wonder o', and I canna bide the thocht o' that ony mair than he can, so we hae tried to put up w' it a', but I dread we will be beat to bide muckle langer. I wadna wish my greatest enemy to tak' my place in this house. I'm grown so nervish that a footfa' at night about the dooc sets me a-shakin'.'

'No wonder, Granny,' said Jack. 'By the 'Flying Dutchman', you've got good pluck. Not a woman in a thousand would stand it.'

'But that's no the warst o't laddie,' continued Granny. 'The very aucht-day cloch stannin' there at the head o' the bed, that we hae haen for fifty year, and could lippin till amaist as weel as the sun i' the lift; has she no been bewitched in this fearfu' house? Ae nicht when the house was quiet, for a wonder, I was just doverin' ower asleep, when bang cam' the clock on the bed, and what wi' the weights thrashin' and the bell ringin', the very wooden bed shook. We might as weel hae been lyin' in the steeple o' the Parish Kirk at the inringin' on the Sabbath-day.'

'That was rather a queer caper of the old chronometer,' observed Jack.

Bob gave him a look, that meant caution.

'I ken nae what you mean by your nomiter,' said Granny, doubtfully, 'but if you had heard it, you wad hae thocht it somethirg out o' the course o' nature. The sweat broke out upon me, I can tell you, and Gaun, he didna need me to wauken him then, for the din micht hae waukent the seven sleepers; he was as feard as I was, for I mind o' hearin' him sayin' a bit prayer. Howsomever, that wasna the end o't that nicht, for after lyin' lang waukin, I was just doverin' ower again, when the bed-claes were whuppit clean aff us, and flung to the middle o' the floor. If it please the Lord, says I, as soon as I could speak, to let me see the licht o' anither day, I'll be out o' this house some way or ither. But Gaun beggit me to bide still, and say naething about it yet; for, says he, the laird put us in here, when we had to leave our last house, and though he is bound to gie us a free beild o' some kind, he's no bound to gie us a choice o' houses, and I ken he hasna anither to gie us in the meantime. So if we leave this ane, we maun leave the place a' thegither. We wadna like to leave Drumly, whaur we hae been sae mony years; and were we to tak' up our abode in ony ither part o' the country, the folk there wad be speirin' how we left the auld place. I tell you, Chirsty, we wad be a speak to a' the country side. We might, indeed, gang to the town o' Dundee, and Andrew wad nae doubt look out for a house to us, but big as that muckle toun is, I dinna think we wad hae room eneugh in't. Besides, lass,' he said syne, 'we maun consider how far our twenty pound a-year wad gae in the town, after house-rent was ta'en aff it. Here I can get something to do, and we hae little to gie for milk and fire; now, there's naething to be had for naething in Dundee, or ony ither borough toun. It's true, Andrew might be willin' to help us, but he has a family o' his ain, and I wad rather live on our ain income and need nae help. So considerin' a' that, we'll hae patience, and bear our troubles quietly for a time, till we see what casts up. So you see, laddies, we're here yet, for your grandfather aye got ower me in that way; and troth to tell, I'm as laith to leave the auld place as he is.'

'I think you did quite right,' said Bob, 'though you may carry your notion of independence too far. Our father and mother, and all of us, would be glad to assist you in any way.'

'Ay, that we would,' said Jack, 'but we'll see what we can do to assist you here in the meantime.'

'Thanks to you, laddies,' quoth Gaun, 'but we're no needin' ony assistance, if we had but peace to live here.'

'Na, na, rejoined Granny,' we're no so bare but that we hae something to the fore, and maybe we may leave something abint us, but for a' that, young folk needna count upon auld folks' shoon.'

'I'm to be your heir, Granny,' cried Jack, 'but long may you live for that matter. Don't leave anything to Bob; he can't keep money.'

'You're a provokin' young rascal,' retorted Granny. 'If I was your mother I wad tak' the taws to you.'

'Never mind his impudence,' said Bob, 'but tell us where you are to put us for the night, for I believe we are keeping you out of bed.'

'Tut, tut, Robbie, we're blithe o' your company,' quoth Granny; 'as for your bed, it's ready when you like. You'll sleep in the back bed-room, next the kitchen here. I wadna put you up stairs, nor yet into the ben-bedroom, but the ane I speak o' has nae ill character, at onyrate; and if you say your prayers when you gae to your bed, you'll sleep as sound as if you war in the parish kirk. I've made it a' richt, and put on plenty o' clean dry blankets, so you'll no tak' cauld frae damp sheets.'

So the young men got to bed among the blankets—Jack protesting against sheets for the future, and declaring that he would recomind Granny's bedding to his mother when he got home. What with their journey on foot—there were no railways in the county then—they soon fell asleep, and slept till morning was far advanced in spite of all the ghosts of Drumly.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

DRUMLY TRADITIONS.

AFTER breakfast, they all went upstairs to overhaul the old hulk, as Jack phrased it. The old man gave them to understand that visitors had been plentiful of late. Mostly all the young fellows in the neighbourhood had called on pretence of seeing the old house that they had often seen before. Every one would sit in the bloody chair up in the garret. They had carried off bits of the blood-stained hair-cloth, and tufts of the hair stuffing, which was matted and glued together in a purple mass. There it stood, in the dim ghostly light, looking ragged, and dark, and dismal. The young men looked at the suicide's seat in silence. Even Jack was a grave man for a time.

'Ay,' said Gaun, 'that's the chair we got him sittin' on, half-sittin' half-lyin', wi' his een starin' wide open, and the great gash and the bloody nicht gear; but he saw nae the white frightened faces afore him, for life was gane, and the spirit was whaur God willed. I'm sure he wasna in his *richt mind* when he did the deed, so he mayna be a'-the-gither accountable. When he was in his sober senses,

better master man never served. I sat up wi' him the nicht afore his death, wi' twa ither, and it took us a' three to haud him down in his bed. He had haen an attack o' the blue deevils, and was sair fouchen wi' them a' night, puir man. He hadn'a been richt sober for a month afore that, and we were appointed to watch him, when he gaed clean wrang in his mind that nicht. We thought the warst o't was ower when he grew quieter towards mornin', so we gae him a wee drap braudy, as we were allowed to do, and syne he fell into a slumber, and we left him, and closed the door cannily, and lockit it on the outside. I kenna how lang it might haes been after that, my neehour watchers were awa hame, for we a' three thought the Captain had got the turn o' his trouble, and that a' danger was ower; and I was sleeping by the kitchen fire, when I was waukent by a loud scream, and as soon as I gathered my senses, I ran to the Captain's room. The door was wide open, and some folk were there, but I only saw the dead man in his chair. There he sat, or lay, I kenna which, wi' a great gash in his neck, and his white sark red wi' bluid, wi' a bluidy razor in his hand, the very ane that had been tint, and lookit for ower a' the house; a' ither thing o' knife kind had been lockit up out o' his way, and whaur he had gotten that razor mortal man couldna tell; but when ony puir sinner is so far left to himself the enemy o' souls is aye ready to help him to his ain destruction. Weel, I never was subject to faintin', but I grew sick at the sight I saw that awfu' mornin'. The room whirled round about, and so did the dead man in his chair, and a' the folk that were there looking at him wi' white faces. How I got back to the kitchen, staggerin' like a drunk man, is mair than I can tell. I saw the bluidy sight o' that morning mony a nicht thereafter in my sleep. To this day I dinna like to think o't, and I hav'na spoken about it for years.'

'Say nae mair about it, man,' said Granny, 'you gar a' my flesh creep.'

'Why, yes, Granny,' said Jack, 'it does make one feel rather crawly, so we'll give the Captain a wide berth, poor old fellow. Whereabouts is the press where they built up the child you told us about?'

'It's in the blue bedroom, as it was ca'd, just aneath the clock turrit. But we're no so sure about that story; it's ower auld to be weel kenn'd for truth,' quoth Granny.

'It is an old tradition of the house,' said Bob, 'and there must have been some foundation for it.'

'Weel, lads,' said Gaun, 'I'll let you see a' the foundation there's for't. You maun ken there was a laird o' Drumly afore it cam' into the Ford family by this laird's grandfather marrying Alice Ford, the heiress. Now that laird o' Drumly was a wild fightin' sinner. He was aye at

feud wi' some o' his neebours, and at last he made the country ower het for himsel', for he stickit the laird o' Monthooly's brither through the wame, i' the Provost's close o' Arbroath, and the puir young fallow staggered awa to Doctor Stein's house, wi' his bowels in his hands. You may be sure Drumly was nae safe place for the manslayer, for Monthooly had mony friends. However, the fightin' laird, as he was ca'd, didna bide the beagles o' the law, nor the ban-dogs o' Monthooly. So John Dures o' Drumly gaed aff abroad, and got plenty o' fightin' in the German wars, whaur he met wi' his match at the last. Meantime, the lady was left at hame, and sair tasket she was to get siller to send awa to the laird, for the estate was but sma', and the rents o' a Scotch laird langsyne wadna be eneuch to pay the taxes now-a-days. It was said that she didna mak' muskle mane for want o' her gudeman. There was a friend o' the laird, wha helpit her to manage in his absence, and it would appear he had been ower earnest in g'ein' her consolation. At ouyrate she lived here like a nun, and saw nae company but that Maister Lyndsay. Now, if ony meddlesome body had acquainted the laird by speech or letter about that extraordinary kindness shewn to his wife, is no kenn'd now, but hame he cam' on a sudden, and his man wi' him, Jock Sprunt, a wild fallow like himsel', and weel kenn'd in his time about Farfar, his native place, whaur he was ca'd the 'King o' the Spont.' Weel, as I said, they cam' on a sudden, ae dark night, and the lady fell on the stane floor o' the ha' when she saw the laird. She had to be carried up the stair and put to her bed, and lang did she lie in that bed, and never left it a livin' woman. Now there had been stane and lime about the toun, and Jock Sprunt, wha was man o' a' wark, was set to bigg a stane wa' that night, and it was said the laird condescendit to be labourer, and between the twa they biggit up the press in the lady's room, and closed up something there, whether quick or dead will only be kenn'd when a' deeds o' darkness are brought to licht.'

'What,' exclaimed Jack, 'did the bloody-minded fellow kill the chicken, and yet spare the old hen.'

'It was a fiendish revenge, if true,' observed Bob.

Granny, who had been away for the key, now invited them down to the lady's room.

'There's the press,' she said. 'The stanes were a' ta'en out afore I saw it. You'll see the mark o' the lime yet. I mind when I was a grown lass o' bein' fear'd to look ahint the hangin's; they're a' torn awa langsyne. Here, into this ingang, was the lady's bed.'

'But,' said Bob, 'what surprises me in this story, is the laborious task of making a grave with stone and lime inside, instead of an easy one in the soft ground outside.'

‘Ay, Robbie lad, I used to wonder at that too,’ said Gaun, ‘but I cam’ to understand that the wicked laird was convinced that his wife, what wi’ the fright and the untimorous birth, would never leave this room alive, and as lang as she lived he meant her to see the place where the nameless thing o’ sin and shame was buried in the wa’ beside her, so that she might never hae peace nor forgetfulness as lang as she lived.’

‘The savage old villain,’ cried Jack. ‘His crime was a thousand times worse than the poor woman’s. Does she haunt this room, Granny?’

‘They say she does, Johnnie. I never saw her mysel’—Gude forbid!—but I hae seen them that saw her, and just about Yule time; let me see, it wad be about the year twenty-twa. It was about the same time o’ year that the laird cam’ hame.’

‘By the bye, Granny, how long was the old devil away,’ inquired Jack.

‘He was years awa’, laddie, but I kenna how mony. How are you spierin’ that?’

‘Never mind, Granny. You were telling us of some one that saw the ghost.’

‘Ay, but there was mair than ane that saw her glidin’ about the room, wringing her hands, or something like that, and aye now and again haltin’ afore that press, as if she couldna get rest for something there. They heard, too, the thuds o’ the mason’s mell, and the clinkin’ o’ the trowel, but they didna see the laird, nor his man, Jock Sprunt.’

‘I thought,’ said Bob, ‘that it was the ghost of the murdered person that haunted the place where the deed was done, or where the bones were left without Christian burial, and this woman was innocent of murder, by all accounts, and was not, at least directly, murdered herself.’

‘We dinna ken about a’ that lad’, said Gaun; ‘she might hae consented to the murder o’ the bairn to save her ain life at the time. There’s a mystery about the matter that winna be cleared up till doomsday.’

‘But were there any remains found when the press was opened?’ inquired Jack.

‘Naething but some rags o’ rotten claithe that mouldered down when they were touched,’ he replied.

‘But you ken,’ said Granny, ‘it couldna be thocht that the wee gristlie banes o’ a new born bairn, born afore its time, could keep like auld banes for a hunder and fifty years and mair.’

‘Was there nothing more than rags in the old locker to throw light on the matter?’ inquired Jack.

‘Naething but an auld buik,’ replied Gaun. ‘It was lyin’ on the tap shelf, a’ mouldy and discoloured. It’s no a printed buik, but a written ane, and the dominie says it’s

been a housewife's buik for keepin' account o' things gotten for the house. It wad be a gude thing in our day if a' housewives wad keep sic an account buik.'

'To be sure,' said Jack, 'they should all keep reckoning. Have you kept the old log-book?'

'I did that,' said Gaun. 'It was offered to the laird, this ane's father, but he said it was o' nae consequence. He wad hae thought mair o' a newspaper; so it was lockit up wi' ither auld buiks that naebody cares for.'

The book was brought from a sort of desk in the top of an old chest of drawers, and submitted to inspection.

'Here, Bob,' cried Jack, 'I can make nothing of it, so give it up to your clerkship. Let's hear what it says?'

'Patience,' replied Bob, 'this will take a little time.'

'Ay, gie him time,' said Granny. 'You had surely been born in a hurry, Johnnie.'

'Don't know, Granny. Can't remember. I'll ask mother when I go home.'

'I hope she'll gie you a clout on the lug, you provokin' rascal.'

'Now,' said Bob, 'I begin to get up to the manner, and can make out some of the entries. "pd to ane packmane ane pund jiii.s. for an duffele till nourice halidaye." Here is another, more savouring of housekeeping, "pd dauvic lousene, baxtere, farfar, sax s.jii penie for quhyte breid and sweet bakes."

'O, ho! They knew how to live in them days. Any ship biscuit?'

'No,' said Bob, 'but this may be something in your line. "pd luckie bothe ye houdie ane merk v.s. for ane hapey hude to uncil Geo. till tak' to ye sea."

'What on earth's that?' exclaimed Jack, 'for old Neptune never heard of such a thing.'

'Weel, Johnnie, for a' your buiklear, you dinna ken that a happy hood is what the English ca' a child's caul,' said Granny.

'Whew, I have it now. You're right, by Jove, Granny. The old skippers used to take the thing to sea for luck, in the same spirit that they nailed a horse shoe to the mast. Go ahead, Bob.'

'You talk, Jack, as if this old calligraphy were as easy to spell through as a "Reading made Easy."

'Never heed the daft loon, Robbie,' said Granny. 'Ye hae read mair out o' the buik already, than Gaun has read to me in forty year.'

'I'm no a clerk like Robbie, woman,' quoth Gaun indignantly.

'Here is something about a wabster that would tackle our father: "gien till Andro peter, wabster, xvij clues lint yarn, xj towe, gat fra him xxxvj ells clraith." How much was in a clue, Granny?'

'I canna tell you that, Robbie. Clues were afore my day.'

'It seems the truck system, or something like it, existed in those days. I find scored against the wabster, "Ane firlot bere meal, ane firlot ait meal, ane peck sownen seids, ane bed cauf." If this settled Andro in full, the record saith not. Here is a tailor, however, done for at once: "pd adie duthie tailyour, for him and his loon thrie dayes, xij.s." Let me see, that would be about threepence sterling a-day for the master, and a penny for the apprentice, with board, of course. How would our modern snips look upon such a scale of payment?'

'But, you know,' said Jack, 'it should be multiplied by nine.'

'Well, it certainly has to be multiplied by nine now, without any reference to nine tailors. Few of the craft, I suspect, would care for going back to threepence a-day, with sowens and kail-brose. Taking into account the different value of money, the ancient stitcher was certainly most miserably paid. He hadn't much to take home to his family. Now many old luxuries have become necessities. We are not so easily kept, but our keep is more comfortable. This is a curious book, Grandfather. Don't let the bothy roughs get hold of it.'

'Deed they winna heed a book they canna understand, Robbie. It's as safe in the desk here as if it were an auld Bible.'

'Eh, Grandfather, you're a bit of a wag,' said Jack. 'Let's see what's in this other room. Here is an old sword as long as a handspoke. What about this old slaughter-tool? Has it got a history?'

'A' that's kenn'd about it, Johnnie, is that it was ta'en out o' the loch about fifty year syne, when the folk here were dredgin' for marl. I should think it had been about sax feet lang, for it comes up to your lugg yet, and you can see that there have been some inches broken aff the point. You see the straught handle down to the guard is about nine inches, for grippin' wi' baith hands, for it's what was ca'd a twa-handit sword; and folk that ken about ancient wappins say that it maun be mair than four hunder year auld, at least.'

'Here is a dirk, or knife, to match,' said Bob. 'The blade is bent like a scimitar, and it has got a buckhorn haft.'

'That's an auld huntin' knife, Robbie. It was gotten in the crap o' the wa'. Thae twa things are a' the wappins o' war, or the chase, that we ken o' about the auld House o' Drumly.'

And now Granny, who had been away 'on hospitable cares intent,' returned, and summoned old and young to their eleven hours.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

EXPLORATION.

AFTER *dinehner* the brothers would have an exploration on their own account. There was little to interest them outside. They had seen the house before, when they were boys, but, of course, had paid little attention to it. There had no doubt been a small park surrounding it formerly, but it had been disparked long ago. Enclosed fields came almost to the walls, and two or three old gnarled trees were all that remained of their venerable race, to sentinel the decaying house, which stood now shorn of its importance ; aloof, yet near enough to form a ghostly appendage, in striking contrast to the modern farm-steading of Drumly. Two houses seemed compounded together, and jammed at right angles, as if two narrow tenements had been cruising about at the flood, when the one had struck the other amidships, or mid-house, going right through, and then had stuck fast. Such was Jack's theory, but when questioned which one had run through the other, he was nonplussed, and declared it was a mystery, the same in kind, though not in degree, as the mutual devouring of the two celebrated Kilkenny cats. The house was of three storeys, or rather two and a-half, if such a mode of calculation be allowable in architecture, the windows of the upper storey being what are called dormer windows, rising half up, staring through the roof, which was steep ; and the four gables were inlanted on the top with steps, miscalled crow-steps, for that sagacious bird rather prefers trees to gables of houses. The door was in one of the angles, at the junction between the twin houses, while the doorway ingeniously projected to abolish the corner, and the like architectural feat was accomplished by a nondescript turret aloft, which bulged out like a provost's paunch, or rather an alderman's, the latter being more especially the type of rotundity. There had been a clock in the turret, or there should have been, which is much the same to this generation, but in case of that doubtful horologue not being available at need, a sun-dial had been built into the wall, midway between basement and roof. As for the windows they were in the here and there style. They had no doubt been placed where light was wanted, but that was a commodity not much in request in old castles, and castellated houses, nor indeed in the minds of men. Big windows and enlightened understandings would appear to have some connection. In the old times, in a dark sense, every man's house was his castle.

But we must now go inside and upstairs, and observe the two young fellows exploring the garrets. We say garrets, for the upper storey of the old house was a complicated labyrinth. Where the two roofs intersected each other, with angular rafters, thick as the beams of a ship, the complication culminated in mystery. An attic room had been made out when required, wherever a window was available, so that there were garrets detached, and beyond, and above garrets, some of them dimly lighted by a distant skylight, and some shrouded in impenetrable gloom. At the point of intersection of the roofs, Jack had clambered up, and was groping his way in darkness over the kipples, the furthest ray of light just making visible a dark cluster beneath the roof-tree, into which cluster he thrust a stick he had got hold of, when he yelled out, 'Hallo ! what the devil's this ?' To Bob's inquiries he made no answer, but kept thrashing about him with his stick for some minutes ; then out of the gloom he emerged with all the speed he could make, and swung himself down like a professional tumbler, with a legion of bats hanging on his clothes, and commenced walloping his arms round him in the utmost consternation ; while Bob, who saw the scared bats flying about, made the attic regions ring with peals of laughter. 'Ha, ha, ha ! Well done, Jack. Heroic sailor ! Wonderful presence of mind—ha, ha, ha !'

'Stop your jaw, Bob. I see what it is now. Yet it's laughable after all. I was just underneath, when I shoved the stick into a black bunch—thought it was a nest, and so it was, by Jove. It was a great cluster of bats it seems, and I brought them down on my head in a shower. They stuck to my hair, and all over my clothes. I tore the young, cold, leathern creatures out of my neck, and felt their claws, I assure you. Here's a fellow sticking on the wall. I'll take him by the tips of the wings. He's nearly a foot from tip to tip. Look how he turns his head and shews his teeth, poor little wretch. I'll put him out of the window bole. See, Bob, how he flutters bewildered in the light ; there, he's down under the tree. I hope he'll find his way up again after dark. Here's another, and another ; why they're sticking all over the walls.'

'Here, Jack,' cried Bob, 'I've got two or three young ones in my hat.'

'Thank you, Bob ; I've got enough of them. I'll away down and see if Granny has got any candle.'

'Ay, do. Tell her you won't stay up here in the dark.'

'You, be hanged. I'll say Bob's afraid.'

In a little, Jack returned with a lighted candle and a bundle of old clothes.

'What's up now ?' inquired Bob.

'Why, Granny scolded me for getting my clothes in such

a mess, and would have me to take up this lot of Grand-father's habs to save our holiday garb, do you see, if we must needs rummage the old garrets. Here goes for an evening dress. Now, I've got rigged. My stars, Bob, what an ancient figure you are. Away down for a looking-glass. Never mind, we'll defy the dust now, my boy. Come along, you've no excuse now. I want to explore all round the attic rooms between slates and plaster. There are plenty of hiding places there for fleshly ghosts, and it strikes me they must leave some trace of their presence. Well try and follow in their wake.'

'Go a-head then, Jack, and I'll follow you.'

With some difficulty they got aloft on the beams of the old hulk, as Jack called it, and holding their candlesticks in their hands, or shoving them along before them, they crawled along on their exploring expedition. They descended at angles into darksome crypts that shewed no appearance of having been visited before. It was evident that the rats, the bats, and the feline huntress of the establishment, were the only mortal creatures of consequence that were likely to visit these unknown regions. Everywhere they encountered dust and cobwebs, that seemed to have been undisturbed for ages, and after a toilsome round, without result, they returned to their starting point, to rest and take counsel together.

'I say, Bob, we're dead beat,' said Jack, ruefully; surely the old folks haven't given out a false alarm after all. What do you think about it?'

'Well, I'm beginning to think Jack, that we are too cunning by half. It's not very likely that any clumsy country ghosts would make their way over there in the dark, when we could hardly manage it with candle light. Let's creep along the floor, between lath and slates; you take the one side, and I the other. If you make any discovery give a shout. I'll do the same. So now for another explore.'

'By jing, you're right, Bob, and I'm an ass. Here goes for the second cruise.'

They had not gone far on their different routes when Jack gave out a 'Hallo' that echoed through the recesses of the upper regions, to which Bob replied, and retraced his way to the open spaces.

'Where are you now?' he cried. 'What is it? A mare's nest?'

'It's a regular ghost's nest, Bob,' replied Jack. 'Come this way.'

By the help of light and sound Bob came to a small door about three feet high in the plaster wall, through which he crept into a room that was dimly lighted by a dormer window thickly coated with dust.

'Look here,' cried Jack. 'Here are the whole properties of the performers. A white sheet—not very white by the bye, with streaks of red ochre, to make it look bloody, and here's a sack with something heavy in it—sand, I declare, and look at this, a turnip lanthorn, as I'm a sinner. What a clumsy device. And here's a lump of chalk. What's that for ?'

'Why, for making a ghostly complexion, no doubt,' said Bob. 'Upon my word a snug dressing-room they've got here, and nothing to disturb them it would appear. This almost invisible window looks out of the back of the house. The door's fast, and seems to be locked. How will we know it from the other side ? I'll put through a piece of paper below. There, that will do. We'll get the key from grandfather.'

'But,' said Jack, 'we mustn't let the fellows know that we've got the 'open sesame,' or they'll be off like a bird whose nest's found out.'

'Of course, so Jack put you everything exactly as you found it. Is there anything else ? What's in this press ?'

'Nothing but dust and rags. But stop ; I'm bliest Bob, if this isn't a woman's bed-gown. Why, this garret dungeon had surely never been a lady's bedroom.'

'But Jack, didn't Granny say that the ghost of a woman had been seen in the room where the press had been built up. Perhaps this may be her gown.'

'The very thing, Bob. By jingo, a pretty plot ! We'll unravel it now, my boy. We've got the clue.'

'Here's more of it, Jack. An old shirt all red blotches in front.'

'And a cocked hat,' exclaimed Jack. 'That makes the Captain's undress uniform complete.'

'Well,' said Bob, 'the actors have got an extensive wardrobe. We've had a peep behind the scenes, and next we'll have a look at the performance. Meantime, we'll leave everything as we found it, and find our way out as we came in. This side entrance, with its little door, seems to have been for stowing away firewood, or other odds and ends.'

'Ay, its a locker without lining. Here we are again, Bob, in open sea. Let's look for the door of the room on the landing.'

'Here it is,' said Bob, 'with my slip of paper peering out below it. It has an old rusty key broken in the lock, where no doubt it has remained for years.'

'Capital,' cried Jack, 'when the ghosts are assembled in their cabin we have no more ado but guard the entry, and we have them in a trap. But we must see the way they get into the house now.'

'We must put off that, Jack, till to-morrow ; it's too dark, and candles won't do outside.'

'It's a pity,' said Jack, 'but I believe we can make no more discoveries to-night. Now, we'll go down and enlighten the old folks so far as to keep them from being alarmed by any sounds they might hear in the operation of casting out devils. The ghosts must know of our presence here by and bye ; everything is soon known that takes place in the country, so they may not venture on their performance till we are away. Yet the rascals must be getting tired of frightening old folk, who will neither cry out nor run away, and no doubt they would think it rare fun to frighten two young fellows from Dundee, so I think they are sure to try it some of these nights. If they attempt to scare us, we must make them believe that we are terribly afraid, until we shall have found out their way of coming and going, and have laid our plans.'

All this was agreed upon, and the old folks were taken into confidence, with certain reservations. It was not thought advisable to expatiate on the properties of gunpowder, phosphorus, blue fire, and other chemical abominations, which were almost as terrible to the simple bodies, as the terrors of the invisible world. They were greatly relieved, however, to think that they had only corporeal ghosts to fear, and as their active cooperation was not required, they entered into the spirit of the ploy with great satisfaction.

That night the hurly-burly began. About midnight the tramping of feet was heard in the rooms above, and the sack-trailing operation went on for some time. Then the ghosts seemed to grow bolder. Muffled footfalls were heard on the stairs, and the doors on the landing were shaken violently. The creaking of doors on their rusty hinges, the flapping of shutters, the trailing of sacks and shuffling of feet, with occasional groans between, made a most ghostly concert in the middle of the night. The young fellows in bed played their part in the double drama by giving vent to exclamations of fear, loud enough to be heard by any ghost that was not dull of hearing. The operators finished off by shewing a fiery head and bloody shirt-front outside the bedroom window, when Jack's exclamation of terror was so natural that it was followed by sounds of smothered laughter, no less natural, outside, waxing louder even as the distance increased ; a rather queer phenomenon.

The listeners concluded that this was a sort of rehearsal of a grand performance, to be forthcoming after ; likewise a sort of feeler to ascertain their gullible capacity, which the experimenters having apparently found to their satisfaction, they would not fail to put to further proof.

Next morning the way and mode of entrance was easily discovered to be by the stairhead window, the lower half of which was wood and opened on hinges. Its two divisions were fastened in the middle by a wooden bar, and an iron bolt at the bottom, that shot down into the sill, but the stone and wood were both decayed, and the least pressure from without was sufficient to open these primitive window boards. The sill and rebats were well scratched with shoe-nails. A convenient tree parted its branches just under this window, the bark of which bore testimony also to the passage of the aforesaid shoe-nails. No doubt those window shutters would open of themselves on windy nights at the touch of Boreas, and play the part of rattling ghosts with fearful effect, in the chorus of unearthly sounds that were mysteriously yet naturally engendered in that dreary house.

The plan of the ghostly operations was now sufficiently clear, but the *modus operandi* of the exorcists could not be so completely settled beforehand as might have been necessary in such a momentous undertaking ; inasmuch as it should have reference to supposed spiritual motions, which to foresee definitely the operators should have been *bona fide* ghosts themselves. It was so far settled, however, that Jack should don his diabolical costume, with a horrible visage glowing with phosphoric fire, horns and all, while Bob should be invisible in dark array, ready to second his infernal coadjutor, and that he should have charge of the pistol, as Jack, he averred, had not yet arrived at the years of discretion, and so was not to be trusted in the matter of firearms ; besides, he added, though they were of devilish invention, they were not used by the devils themselves, and shouldn't be by their representative.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

THE PLAY BEGINS.

ON the eventful night that followed, all were in bed, or were supposed to be so, in the old House of Drumly. About midnight the play began in earnest ; all the sounds heard on the previous night were repeated now, with the newest improvements. They were very industrious, the ghosts of Drumly. Grain shovelled and measured and sacked, with all the appropriate sounds, seemed to be going on overhead, and the ghostly feet seemed to shake the floors. Then the groans that filled up the pauses of the din, were as awful as those heard by the Florentine bard on the confines of the 'burning marble.' Anon was heard the drawing of corks, and the rushing of liquor, quite naturally, as if the ghostly

captain himself was refreshing, with his nocturnal blue devils. From a back room came sounds like the stifled scream of a woman, and the feeble wail of an infant, which were soon drowned by the great waves of sound that now were sweeping over the whole house. But ears were not the only organs that had the benefit of this ghostly performance. Two pair of eyes were peering at the actors from well-chosen points of observation. And the eyes had the worst of it, for the sight of the spectral figures had rather a disenchanting effect. The principal figure, who seemed to be ganger over the infernal squad, sported a cocked hat, and a great-coat, the fashion and colour of which could hardly be made out in the moonlight that streamed through the dusty windows, but his crimson-stained shirt front was glaring enough to be distinguished, and his chalky face had a ghostly appearance. There was a taller spectre, who had something like a colt's tail on his head, the long hair falling over his face, and in lieu of a coat he sported a calf's skin, 'in longitude so sorely scanty,' that the long corduroys were visible thereunder. A third was a two-headed spectre, the upper one being a fiery head, that bore a suspicious resemblance to a neep lantern, and his body, or what should have been his body, was wrapped in a white sheet. The fourth was an amazonian ghost, with a woman's white bedgown, and a mutch of the old-fashioned kind called sowbacks; and he completes the tale of the midnight crew.

The spiritual troop appeared to have been well drilled, as they went through their exercise as if to the manner used in the body, and as their spirits rose with their spiritual diversion, they became excited till,

‘The mirth and fun grew fast and furious,’

when, by means of a certain dark lantern, and matches, that did not belong to that dramatic corps, the house was suddenly lighted up with blue fire, and became a veritable pandemonium.

The astonished ghosts of Drumly were enveloped in a circle of fire; the blue lights streamed ghastly from every recess, and made their blue horrified faces frightful to each other. And now a direful demon seeming all afame from Tartarus, horned like the goat, and 'bearded like the pard,' confronted the trembling ghosts. Spirits in corduroy could stand it no longer and live. With a yell more natural than all their mimic groans, they fled, in their agony of fear they knew not whither. The master of the revels, by an instinct of retreat, was crushing his way through the window of escape, when the awful appearance again confronted him, *as he turned to descend the tree, and with a fearful cry, cut short, he lost his hold, and fell crashing through the branches to the ground.*

‘The poor devil’s killed,’ cried Jack, forgetting that he was a devil himself just then, and rushed down stairs followed by Bob. They got the door opened with some difficulty, and made their way to the back of the house. There they found the poor embodied spectre lying insensible at the foot of the ghost’s tree. They carried him into the house and laid him on the floor of the kitchen. Light was procured, with all the speed obtainable, with tinder and flint, and they bathed his face and temples with cold water for some time before restoring animation. Gaun was up and looking on with mute surprise. Mrs Taply, who had also risen, brought some spirits, not ghosts, from her cupboard, and they poured a little into his mouth with a tea-spoon, when he began to shew unmistakeable signs of life and consciousness. But with returning consciousness also returned the sense of pain, and he groaned in sad earnest when they attempted to move him. The chalk being washed off his face, which was now pale enough without it, Granny exclaimed,

‘O, bless me, that’s George Braid o’ the Mains.’

The wounded lad groaned afresh at this recognition. He was now suffering in mind and body, and the merciful group around him were incapable of adding to his sufferings by reproach. He was a young lad of sixteen or seventeen, who had never thought of the annoyance he was giving, but had been entirely taken up with the fun of the thing. And there he lay with his white face and closed eyes as if he were soon to become a ghost indeed. They asked him where he was hurt? He touched his left arm with the right hand. When they moved the injured limb, he groaned heavily.

‘The arm’s broke,’ said Jack. ‘We must get him home somehow. Where does he live?’

‘He bides at the Mains,’ quoth Granny, ‘but you couldna carry him sae far; and I doot if he could bear to be carried, puir chiel.’

‘I’ll stag yont to the Mains,’ said Gaun, ‘and tell his father.’

‘And I’ll go with you,’ said Jack. ‘Granny and Bob will attend to the poor fellow while we are away. Meantime we’ll put him to bed, or pull the bed out here if he can’t be lifted.’

They laid down a mattress on the floor, and as they lifted him on to it, he moaned sorely. They propped the broken arm in the easiest position they could think of, and then the old man and Jack set out for the Mains. The family were all asleep, but they roused the farmer, who opened the window, and demanded what they wanted at that time o’ night. Gaun said that they wanted to tell him that George had gotten himself hurt.

'George,' he exclaimed in surprise, 'why, I thought he was in his bed three hours ago.'

Jack then told him, by way of smoothing the matter, that some lads had been larking about Drumly; that his son George was among them, and had fallen and hurt himself, not dangerously, but as he was not able to walk home, they had left him in his grandfather's house, and come to tell his folks.

Here another head in night dress was put out of the window, and a shriller voice inquired,

'Is that you, Gaun Tap? What's come o'er George?'

'Weel, Mrs Braid,' replied he, 'we think he has broken his arm.'

'Broken his arm,' she repeated. 'Haste you on wi' your claes, gude-man, and yoke the shault i' the gig and bring him hame. Dinna gae awa, Gaun. The gude-man'll let you in when he comes down.'

They were more closely questioned after they got into the house, for Mrs Braid soon came down, and she contrived to worm the most part of the truth out of them, especially from the old man, who was not particularly delicate in the matter.

'I canna make out,' said the farmer, 'how he could have got out o' the house without being heard.'

'He has gane out, though,' said his mother, 'for I was in his bedroom. The bed hasna been slept in this night.'

It was never thought of by the mystified couple that George's bedroom window was but two or three feet above the roof of the dairy, from which there was an easy descent to a coalhouse, from which there was an easy descent to the ground. It was as good as a rope ladder. Neither farmer Braid of the Mains, nor farmer George of Windsor, should have put their sons to sleep in rooms with such convenient outlets. Probably George Braid's experience with his own had suggested his entrance by Gaun Tap's stairhead window, into the House of Drumly.

Meanwhile Jack and his grandfather are on their way back to the old house, with Mr Braid, in the spring cart, which was thought to be better than the gig for the occasion. They found the lad, when they came in, lying in a feverish state, attended by Granny and Bob.

'What's this you've been about, George,' asked his father. Are you much hurt?'

'Ay,' replied he ruefully.

'I think he should have a doctor, sir,' observed Bob, 'to decide if he is fit to be taken home. His arm is broken, I am afraid.'

'Do you think you could bear the motion of the spring cart?' asked his father.

'I dinna ken,' he murmured.

'I'll better drive down to the Kirkton and bring the doctor back with me, if I can persuade him to rise and come at this time o' night, or rather morning.'

So Mr Braid drove off, and after a considerable time, returned with the doctor, who, poor man, did not look very well pleased at this untimely call. The doctor now examined his patient, who winced and groaned under his professional hands. He advised that the lad should be taken home at once, and, by his instructions, he was lifted into the cart, where Jack sat and held him as directed, and so they proceeded to the Mains. Mrs Braid, and her daughter, who had also risen, met them at the door; the patient was assisted upstairs, undressed, and put to bed, when Jack took his leave, promising to call next day.

The brothers called next day at the Mains, with some misgivings about their welcome, especially Jack, whose masquerading was the immediate cause of the accident, but they were made very welcome, notwithstanding, by Mrs Braid and Miss Maggie Braid, the farmer being out of doors, and informed that George was not so feverish now; he was more easy since his arm was dressed, and that the doctor had called again that morning and assured them there was no other serious hurt. They were then shewn upstairs. The patient seemed a little shy of their company; but told them in answer to their inquiries that he felt better. Then there came a series of inquiries from his mother how the accident occurred, and Bob began to give the ladies a sort of history of the matter; when Jack caught an imploring glance from the culprit in bed, which he interpreted as an appeal for mitigation, so he interposed in an off-hand way.

'I say, Bob, you'll weary the ladies with a yarn as long as the day and the morrow.'

At this time the farmer came in laughing, and said,

'What about the ghosts of Drumly? This morning I've found out the whole affair.'

'I was just about to make confession, sir, when you came in,' said Jack. 'The truth is, there had been some playing at bogies going on before, in the old house, to frighten the Johnnie Raws in the neighbourhood, and perhaps to scare the old folks in the house, who might be thought to be a little superstitious. Understanding from them how the land lay as far as they could see, we explored all the dark-some regions about Drumly House, and came upon a secret cabin where the tricky rogues held their rendezvous; and there was all their ghostly paraphernalia of white sheet, bloody shirt, and so forth. Now we thought it likely that the ghosts, knowing two town-bred chickens were roosted in the old crib, would have a lark at our expense, and amuse themselves by frightening us. As we had seen their cards, we knew how to play the game against them; so

you see, instead of going to work so as to surprise and capture the intruders, we entered into the fun of the thing, so far as to try them at their own game, and, in short, to frighten the ghosts. Now this accident, which might have been worse, proves that we were to blame as well as they were. By means of chemicals, which we had procured, and judged them to be ignorant of, we lighted up a pandemonium, complete, in an instant, when their ghostly play was at its height. The poor spectres were utterly astounded and paralyzed. George appeared to have retained his senses so far as to make for the window that admitted them. As he turned round on the tree outside, the horrible appearance was before his eyes, he lost his hold—and here he is poor fellow, laid up for a time; I hope it won't be long. So you see that we are also partly to blame in this affair. I hope, ladies, you'll forgive us all, and you, Mr Braid. We'll be good boys for the time to come,

‘And we'll go no more a-roving,
A-roving in the night.’

Eh, George?

The fariner burst out a-laughing, in which he was joined by his wife and daughter. The young lady again and again burst out afresh, and laughed till the tears were in her eyes. At length, perceiving George's long face, she went to the bedside, and, patting him on the head, said,

‘Excuse me, Geordie, you naughty boy; I couldn't help it.’

Geordie, with a faint smile, said, ‘Laugh away, Maggie, I deserve waur than to be laughed at.’

‘Weel, George, my man,’ said his father, ‘you may lay your account for laughter at all events. Really you have made a pretty mess of your sport. I wouldn't have thought so badly of it, if it had not been for the poor old folks. It was rascally; and I must say that you have only got your deservings. Boys now-a-days are very devils for mischief, and yet when I look back thirty years or so—hum, the less said about it the better. But where did you pick up your share of devilment, young sailor, for I don't take you for a saint, I assure you. It was not from your father, at all events, for Andrew Taply was a douce lad when I was at school with him. Give him my compliments when you go home, and tell him I'm obliged to his sons for laying the ghosts of Drumly; though I'll have to pay the piper, no doubt, that is, the doctor. And Geordie here must pay too, in one sense, as he ought to do. He'll have to draw on his short stock of patience; but his mother and sister are his nurses, and let them alone for coddling him up. They've spoiled him between them.’

‘Never mind the gudeman,’ said Mrs Braid, ‘folk that dinna ken him wadna ken whether he were in jest or earnest.’

‘If mother and I were to rail at Geordie now, I ken wha

wad take his part,' said Maggie Braid. 'You maun take some part o' the blame for spoiling Geordie on your own broad shoulders, Mr Braid.'

So saying, she seconded her saucy remark by a clap on the shoulders aforesaid, and broke out into a ringing laugh ; whereupon the good-natured farmer pinched her ear, and called her a chattering thing. It was evident that the family at the Mains of Drumly were under a mild paternal government. The Taplys soon after took their leave, but they were no strangers afterwards at the Mains. Jack stayed at Drumly some time longer than Bob, whose stay was limited to three days ; and he made frequent calls at the Mains, and got to be quite at home with the family, after Bob was away. He became a great favourite with the farmer and his wife, and quite gracious with Maggie Braid ; even George and he came to be fast friends, although their acquaintance had not a very propitious beginning. When he was ashamed to protract his stay any longer he, too, left Drumly and the Mains, for the Thorter Row, Dundee. Before leaving, he delivered up to the shamefaced spectres, whom George had convened, their boots and jackets, and other properties, whether pertaining to their spiritual or corporeal capacities. They had been glad to escape from the scene of their discomfiture, while all but themselves were attending on their wounded leader. In return, they gave their parole of honour that they would never again—vowed, 'as sure as death,' they never more would—haunt the House of Drumly, by the wan light of the moon. The farmer and gudewife charged Jack with their best respects to his father and mother. George was to call upon him as soon as he was able to be in the town ; Maggie was to pay a long visit to an aunt in the Nethergate, and said she might chance to see him while she was there ; but she was half aware that such an important meeting would not be left to precarious chance. Jack noted down the aunt's address in his memory, and the old lady's domicile henceforth became a very interesting house to Jack Taply.

And now I should be drawing this veritable story of 'The Ghostly House' to a close, for the very sufficient reason that the ghosts are laid, and so the play is ended. But there are spinners of yarns not only aboard ship but in periodicals, ay, even in pulpits, who really don't seem to know when their tow is all used up. As I have no ambition to be classed with such maunderers, I will merely indicate a certain house in the Nethergate that was as duly haunted, though in other fashion, as was the House of Drumly. A certain hint of a short residence there was improved upon, till intimacy with the old lady was secured, and a perfect understanding with the young one. The pair 'grew unco-thick and thrang thegither.' But spring wore on, and the time came for Jack to go to sea, and Maggie to go to th-

Mains of Drumly. Kind reader, relieve me, if you can, by imagining all the billing and cooing inseparable from such a parting, and let us hasten to the time of Jack's return from a long voyage, when he found the following letter awaiting his arrival, which he opened with some trepidation, and read:—

‘Mains of Drumly.

DEAR JACK,—As my sister Magg ca's me naething but ‘The ghost,’ I mean to be revenged on her by sending you a sang that she sings. I didna steal it, mind you, I only copied it, and put the thing back in her drawer, where I got it, for she wad have missed it, and ca'd me thief, which wad be a waur name than ghost. I dinna ken if she made it up hersel’, or if you had made it, and sent it to her, to get her to sing about you. Gude faith, you sly rascal, I believe that's the right way o't. I dinna ken where you lovers get a' your angels and heroes. For my pairt I think that lasses are like young cats. They will purr and pat you wi' their soft paws, when you please them, but just conter them, and you will find their claws in no time. Now, if you tell Magg wha it was that sent you the sang, I'll find her claws, I can tell you, though you may think butter wadna melt in her mouth. So, mind you, Jack Tar, and no betray me, or I'll put some mischief atween her and you, and so be revenged on you baith.—Your friend,

GEORGE BRAID.

Enclosed within this precious epistle, was the copy of Maggie Braid's sang thus surreptitiously obtained, and sent with the wicked intention of betraying her partiality for her sailor lad. Sisters with secrets, beware of younger brothers. Here then is

MAGGIE BRAID'S SANG.

They tell me that a sailor's lass
Ne'er lets her roses wither,
For when her lover's on the sea
She smiles upon anither.
But was beside the worthless thing
Wha wears his true love token,
And wae's me for the luckless lad
Wha trusts a reed that's broken.
I'm leal and true to Jacket Blue,
My lad so brave and comely;
I wadna gie my sailor dear
For a' the lads in Drumly.

They tell me that a sailor's wife
Mann be but wae and weary;
If leal she be, when he's at sea
She never can be cheery.
But aye when my dear lad comes hame,
We'll haes a sweet rejoining;
I'll meet him like a new-made wife
When the honey moon is shining.
I'm leal and true to Jacket Blue,
My lad so brave and comely;
I wadna gie my sailor dear
For a' the lads in Drumly.

The reader need not be surprised to be told that the honeymoon of these lovers is long past. The old folks are gone the way of all the world, and a new generation has sprung up since then, and thrust their fathers into their grandfathers' place. Jack Taply, though he may not be known by that name, is now an elderly man, and a respectable shipowner in Dundee. Maggie Braid, now long Mrs Taply, is still a comely matron, though the mother of grown-up sons and daughters. 'Twas said the couple were indebted for a start in life to their friends in the Thorter Row and the Mains of Drumly. No matter; if they got help it was not thrown away. Bob Taply became a manufacturer, and of course all manufacturers get rich. The Ghost of Drumly is a substantial farmer in the Carse of Gowrie. Does he not weigh sixteen stone? May his shadow never grow less!

SANDY SAUNT'S CAUF.

AULD Sandy had a guude milk cew—

She was as black's a craw,
Yet strange to say, she had a cauf
That was as white's the snaw.

The cow, she was a canny cow,
And kenn'd baith far and wide ;
The cauf, it was the biggest cauf
In a' the country side.

Now Sandy he wad spean the cauf,
And tak' it frae its mither ;
He couldna langer thole to keep
Sic black and white thegither.

It was about the Mart'mas time,
When leaves forsake the tree,
That Sandy rais'd a canvas byre
Outower upon the lea.

But the wintry wind brought sleety showers,
And the cauld draps wad be in ;
They dribblit down on the puir yœung cauf,
And droukit its braw white skin.

Syne Sandy gaed to the borough-town,
And he coft a purley-pig,
And sent his herd-loons far and near,
Amang his friends to beg.

They begget north, they begget south
Amang the Jocks and Jennys,
And soon cam' back to Sandy Saunt
Wi' the purley fu' o' pennies.

They begget east, they begget wast,
They begget ower the water,
And aye the purley pig was filled,
And aye the cauf grew fatter.

It was about the Whitsuntide,
 The cauf was grown a stirk,
 That Sandy reared a braw stane byre,
 Amaist as big's a kirk.

But now twa Ranters frae the wast
 Vexed Sandy's very saul ;
 Anent the raisin' o' the wind
 They raised an unco squall.

'Shame fa' you, Sandy ; slavers' gold
 Into your pouch maun clatter ;
 Send back the money, Sandy Saunt,
 You begget ower the water.'

But Sandy buttoned up his pouch—
 Quoth he, 'The end is holy,
 And sae whatever means we use,
 It sanctifies them wholly.

We tak' their gowd, though nae weel come—
 Of that we wash our hands—
 A Pagan's penny is as gude
 As ony Christian man's.'

A blessin' rests on a' that gie
 A penny to our herds,
 Because their sustentation tub
 Has nae Erastian girds.'

With that the stirkie cock'd her tail,
 And friskëd ower the lea,
 To house her in her begget byre,
 Rejoicin' to be free.

And she will aye be Sandy's pet,
 And she will bear the bell,
 Until she come to be a cow
 And hae a cauf hersel'.

NOTE TO SANDY SAUNT'S CAUF.

This little bit of waggery might have been spared in this volume, but some of my readers would have better spared a better piece. It will be generally admitted that there is no ill-nature in the thing; Free Churchmen themselves can smile at it now, though some of them did look glum when it first appeared in print. Now, instead of being opposed to the non-intrusion principle, I signed petitions for abolition of patronage previous to the disruption. But I, as well as a great many others, thought that the great break-up was rashly done. None can deny that it was a noble sight to witness such a great number, for conscience sake, leaving their certain livings to encounter the uncertain future, which then, even to the most sanguine, must have appeared very uncertain indeed. But could they not have remained in the Church, under protest, and formed an anti-patronage league, which might have become as irresistible as the Anti-Corn Law League? We have but one legitimate way of getting a bad law amended or repealed, and that is well exemplified in the case of the Corn Laws. Who can doubt that the same amount of pressure from without, as long continued, and as ably supported, on this question of patronage would have sufficed at length to move our backward legislators to a sense of justice. But be that as it may, it was the extreme length that some of the non-intrusion party went, in condemning others as lukewarm Christians, scarcely worthy of the name, whose temperaments were not so enthusiastic as theirs, who were almost burned up with zeal, that laid them open to satire. In Blairgowrie there was such a revival of the old spirit as would have pleased even 'Douce David Deans' himself. I remember being sent, along with another, to a whitewashing job in the manse, which was vacant, and was being prepared for the new incumbent. As we were opening the gate, a woman passing by said to us, 'I wonder how you wad gae into that den to whitewash.' 'Deed gudewife,' I replied, 'we wad whitewash ony den, if we were sure to get out again, and to get paid for't.' Another woman, on seeing the Episcopalian minister and two young ladies passing on horseback, exclaimed, 'Preserve's! there he gae gallopin' through the country wi' idle limmers o' leddies, wi' a grey coat on, and he counts himself a minister too.' Nor were the men much behind the women in the way of prejudice. It was such little flashes of absurdity that threw a ludicrous light, sometimes, on one of the most serious questions of the age. The young Free Church was inclined to draw the reins of discipline too tight at first, and that also tended to weaken the sympathies of the more liberal, or as she considered them, more lukewarm, portion of the community. Many in this district can remember of a farm servant and his wife being persecuted and threatened with excommunication for burying a child on a Sunday. This Judaical Sabbatharianism has done much to widen the breach between the churches. As for the law of patronage, its repeal is but a question of time. Let us hope that by that time, the old and new churches will have become one in spirit as they are essentially one in doctrine.

ELEGY ON THE LATE ROBERT PROCTOR, FORFAR

I'LL pen an elegiac rhyme
To him, a worthy son o' Forfar,
And gie to her and neebour touns
My humble reasons why and wherefore.

Fu' weel the 'Fouk o' Forfar' ken,
That Bob could gie them rhyme or reason,
And speak his mind o' kings and lords,
When that was maist accounted treason.

Puir chiel ! he never meant to wrang,
But right the wrangs o' saunt and sinner,
He wad hae gien a deil in want
The big half o' his himmost dinner.

There's some like Jacob's envious sons,
That yet could be their brither sellers ;
Puir Bob, *he* would hae darned a hole
In Joseph's coat o' mony colours.

Nae envy o' the rich or great
Ere ruffled cheery Robin's feathers,
Freedom and right was a' he sought,
And freely wad award to ither.

Some, trim and tidy, pick their staps
Wi' tenty heed for ever walkin',
Some dash alang life's miry ways,
Nor care a strae for Warren's blackin'.

Nae worship o' the outward man
Could e'er be seen in his external,
And sooth to say, nae great display
O' self-esteem for his internal.

Some hae a partial lookin'-glass,
That smooths to them their wrinkled vizy.

But they can see a mole or wart
Disfigure ony ither's phizy.

Their selfish hearts grow less and less,
Collapse and shrivel up sae narrow,
But his, enlarging to the last,
Grew o'er big for a warld o' sorrow.*

And if a flaw was in his head,
Or if a bee was in his bonnet,
O, surely that might mak' amends
To a' the warld, or fie upon it.

Ay, Bob, my friend, your bits o' fauts
Might only move the censor's laughter,
The rest, writ down by angel's pen,
Will stand you weel in stead hereafter.

Sae fare-ye-weel, my hearty friend ;
For mair than thirty years I've kent ye,
Few better hae I lost afore,
And fewer still remain ahint ye.

SCIENCE.

THY revelations most amazing are
Proud Science ; and thy triumphs manifold.
We canonise thy pioneers of old,
By bigots doomed, and spurned by brands of war :
Now, harness we the lightning to thy car—
Now, gazing with our naked eyes, behold
Earth's annals, time-engraven, as she rolled
Through space, ere foot of man did cumber her ;
And with *thine eye*, see in the glorious zone
Myriads of suns, and worlds of foreign lands.
Proud Science !—yet, for all that thou hast done—
Yet art thou ever to the helot-bands
A prisoned eagle, pining for the sun—
A stranded triton, gasping on the sands.

* *Enlargement of the heart was the cause of his death, and in another sense he was a man of large heart, as well as superior intellect.*

LINTRATHEN BRAES.

LINTRATHEN braes were clad
Wi' the bonnie blooming heather,
And the snawy gowans spread
In the sunny summer weather,
By the shallow water side.
Now a' is bleak and bare
Where I have been wi' thee, love ;
But fancy ever there
A sunny blink can see, love—
The light o' thy dark e'e.

Lintrathen bracs are white,
The winter winds are raving,
But gleams o' glancing light,
And leafy boughs are waving
In dreams o' dear delight.
I hear thy gentle voice,
Thy smiling face I see, love,
Thy glowiug lips I kiss
In dreaming fancy free, love,
When sleep has closed my e'e.

And fondly I recall
The flowers on muir and mountain,—
The little warblers all,
And lake, and stream, and fountain,
And gushing waterfall.
I love them for thy sake :
If thou be false to me, love,
My proud heart may not break,
But never more I'll see, love,
A heaven in woman's e'e.

Lintrathen, fare thee well,
 I claim thy fairest maiden ;
 I left thy lonely dell
 As the bee with honey laden
 Frae the bonnie heather bell.
 Light fancies may depart
 As fleeting shadows flee, love ;
 Thy image in my heart
 For evermore will be, love,
 Till death has closed my e'e.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

WHY should our Poet Laureate dwell
 On such fantastic themes ?
 The dreamer should be brief who tells
 To busy men his dreams.
 The world is now so wide awake
 That Arthur's bard will fail
 To keep his well-won laurels green
 By the quest of the Holy Grail.

For what avails the poet's art,
 Though perfect in its kind,
 If art is all ; and in the theme
 No sympathy we find ?
 Rare thoughts, like gems in waters clear,
 What can they all avail
 To beautify a silly myth
 Like this of the Holy Grail ?

O rare Don Quixote, rise again,
 And rouse thy faithful squire,
 If in thy ashes lives a spark
 Of old adventurous fire.
 Let windmills lift their arms in peace,
 And show each shining sail—
 To horse, and join King Arthur's knights
 In the quest of the Holy Grail.

THE LASS THAT LO'ED ME DEARLY.

MY Annie dwelt on Angus Brae,
A blooming muirland maiden,
Content amang the heather bells,
In a coat o' hamely plaidin'.
To busk her braw, in silk attire,
I followed fortune fairly ;
To gather gear I left my love,
The lass that lo'ed me dearly.

But far awa' in foreign land,
My heart was leal and lonely ;
Though mony a bonnie face I saw,
I lo'ed my Annie only.
And though ambition shared my heart,
I thought baith late and early
O' th' love I left on Angus Braes,
The lass that lo'ed me dearly.

I held her in my clasping arms
That weary day we parted ;
My blushing rose—my lily pale—
My true, my tender hearted !
But, wi' her tears upon my lips,
I left her mourning sairly,
And never, never saw her mair,
The lass that lo'ed me dearly.

She faded in her lanely hame ;
My Annie drooped and faded,
So like a sun-forsaken flower,
By rank weeds overshaded.
In vain they say that nought could save ;
This thought will haunt me sairly—
I left her to an early grave,
The lass that lo'ed me dearly.

Oh, wae betide the warl'd's gear,
 That makes us pause and ponder !
 The sweetest flowers o' life grow sere
 While lovers pine asunder.
 Oh, wae betide ambition's fire
 That scorches hearts sae early,
 And ither leave to pine and die,
 The hearts that lo'e sae dearly !

THE WINSOME WIFE.

THE winsome wife o' Watty Glen,
 Sae bonny and sae braw,—
 Sae couthy aye wi' ither men
 When her gudeman's awa'.
 There's glamour in her bright blue e'e ;
 Her face is blythe and fair,
 Wi' blooming roses red and white,
 And lips sae ripe and rare.

Auld Watty lo'es his youthfu' dame ;
 A kind gudeman is he ;
 And Jenny meets him wi' a smile,
 But love it canna be.
 O lease me on the bright new moon,
 That kindly clasps the auld ;
 But waes me for the winter snaw
 That simmer beams enfauld !
 The winsome wife, &c.

The jade yestreen bewitched me clean :
 My lass gaed lanely hame—
 While I gaed lightly through the dance
 Wi' Watty's winsome dame.
 She was sae lithe and maiden like
 As she gaed through the reel—
 Wi' heaving bosom peering white
 Through faulds o' silken tweel.
 The winsome wife, &c.

Her looks, and smiles, and wanton wiles,
 Nae man may weel withstand :
 She wad beguile a saint to sin,
 And brak the chaste command.
 But Watty is the best o' men :
 He'll ne'er be wrang'd by me ;
 I'll conquer like an honest loon,
 Or fairly turn and flee.

The winsome wife o' Watty Glen,
 Sae bonny and sae braw,—
 Sae couthy aye wi' ither men
 When her gudeman's awa'.
 There's glamour in her bright blue e'e ;
 Her face is blythe and fair,
 Wi' blooming roses red and white,
 And lips sae ripe and rare.

KATIE BEATTIE.

WAITIN' by the Ladle Well—
 Weary waitin' in the gloamin'—
 Ilka minute is an hour
 Till I see my Katie comin' :
 Comin' barefoot frae the toon,
 Liltin' up a lightsome ditty,
 Wi' her lips sae rosy red ;—
 O, my bonnie Katie Beattie !

I'm a dummie by her side,
 Slowly pacin' through the plantin' ;
 Wae's my pluck—my tongue is tied—
 I canna tell her what I'm wantin',
 For her twa black pawky een,
 For her tongue sae glibe and witty,
 For this duntin' heart o' mine ;—
 O, my bonnie Katie Beattie !

When we sat by Hungerheigh,
Just as I was at the speirin',
Came a laugh out-ower the wood,
Set my very hair a steerin'.
Katie up, and ran awa' ;
Weel she kenn'd it wasna Clootie,
But a muckle horse's calf ;—
O, my bonnie Katie Beattie !

When she's gane, and I'm alone,
Wi' the very wind I'd quarrel ;
Sic a coof was never seen—
Never seen in a the warl
A' our fous they jeer and mock ;
Now they ca' me simple Patie,
Daised and daft, and a' for love ;—
O, my bonnie Katie Beattie !



